

*The Story of
Grand Duchess Anastasia*

THE WOMAN
WHO ROSE AGAIN

By Gleb Botkin

THE REAL ROMANOV

*As revealed by the son of the
late Czar's physician (killed
with his sovereigns),*

"Gleb Botkin has every reason to know what he is talking about, and he writes with a gallant objectivity that proves the sincerity of his purpose. . . . Reads with the thrill that one attaches to the account of an eye-witness. It does more than entertain the minds, it stirs the blood."—*New Outlook*.

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GRAND DUCHESS ANASTASIA AS SHE IS TODAY

THE WOMAN WHO ROSE AGAIN

BY

GLEB BOTKIN

Author of "The Real Romanovs," etc.



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PUBLISHER'S NOTE

IN PUBLISHING *The Real Romanovs*, the author's previous work, while Grand Duchess Anastasia was still in this country, we were convinced of the truth of the author's story. We also shared the opinion of Allen W. Porterfield who wrote in *The New Outlook* at the time that "American people would be interested in not only helping to prove her identity, but to do something for her."

Although there were but three chapters devoted to her story in that book, practically all reviews and letters that have come to the publisher and the author since its publication, have been concerned with the authenticity of that part of the author's narrative. Convinced as we were of the whole truth of the author's positive identification of Anastasia, we were unprepared for the wealth of corroborative evidence that has been coming to us during the years that followed, including a demand for more particulars regarding the Grand Duchess and her story.

The present book aims to set down the most intimate details regarding the author's experiences with the rescued daughter of the last Imperial Family of Russia, with documentary proof of the essential facts. Additional evidence, consisting of letters, documents and affidavits etc., in our possession would require another volume, equally as large as this, to present in full.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE

This work necessarily summarizes much of the details given in the previous book, but we believe all who read these pages will recognize in Anastasia the character the author seeks to portray, and that all who really wish to be satisfied will be convinced that she not only escaped the massacre at Ekaterinburg, but is deserving of the sincere comfort and sympathy of the entire world.

June 1937.

AUTHOR'S FOREWORD

I HAVE written this book about the extraordinary and tragic case of Grand Duchess Anastasia, officially designated as Mrs. Tschaikovsky, in response to countless enquiries on the subject addressed to me in the course of the last ten years.

Unfortunately, it is not possible at the present time to give a complete and fully documented account of that case, for it has not as yet passed into history—is indeed expected to become the subject of litigation. Thus in writing about it I have been hampered as much by the laws controlling publicity—laws which regrettably often offer greater protection to wrongdoers than to innocent victims of slander—as by considerations of policy on the part of the various lawyers involved in the case.

Even so, the cardinal facts pertaining to the Grand Duchess's rescue and the truly mediæval cabal of which she has become the victim, can be and are openly stated in this book. Moreover, I personally am not a lawyer and the value of my testimony concerning the Grand Duchess's identity rests chiefly on my acquaintance with her of many years' duration. It was twenty-nine years ago that I first saw Anastasia—then a child of seven. It was in May, 1918, that I saw her for the last time before the Ekaterinburg massacre. Also, the question asked me most often is:

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"What makes you so certain that Mrs. Tschaikovsky is actually Grand Duchess Anastasia?"

That latter question, I believe, my present book answers fully.

That there exists so much scepticism in regard to the Grand Duchess's identity is only natural. To begin with, her enemies, while lacking all evidence in support of their contentions, did not lack ingenuity in their manner of stating those contentions. For instance, Grand Duke Alexander declared in one of his statements that he could not believe Mrs. Tschaikovsky to be Grand Duchess Anastasia, because the latter had never had browo hair and did not speak Lithuaniao.

Well, it so happens that Mrs. Tschaikovsky's hair is not brown but blond, and she does not know a word of Lithuaonian. But how can the average newspaper reader know that? He reads Grand Duke Alexander's statement and is convinced by the seemingly weighty argument it cootains.

Furthermore, the story of Grand Duchess Anastasia's rescue and subsequent trials is admittedly an extraordinary one; and many of us are either unwilling or afraid to believe in extraordinary things. In actual fact, however, we are faced with a much more extraordinary situation the moment we assume that Mrs. Tschaikovsky is an impostor. I hope that my present account, in spite of its limitations, will cause the reader to agree with the statement made ten years ago by my cousin, Sergius Botkin, that Mrs. Tschaikovsky is either Grand Duchess Anastasia or a miracle.

The events of the last ten years, described in this book, have only added weight to that statement. In

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truth, were Mrs. Tschaikovsky an impostor, not only would she herself be a miracle, but her whole case would defy all rational explanation.

Incidentally, I owe an apology to the readers of my book *The Real Romanovs* in which the case of Grand Duchess Anastasia was briefly mentioned. In that earlier account I stated that Anastasia was rescued from the forest to which the bodies of the victims were taken for cremation. Such a theory actually existed, and I have made the very error against which I am now warning my readers, that is, chosen a theory which appeared more probable at first glance; for it would have been easier to rescue the Grand Duchess from the forest than from the house of the murder.

Yet, further study of all available evidence has convinced me that it was not from the forest but from the house that Anastasia was rescued. And having reached that conclusion, purely on the basis of existing evidence, I realised that it was not only the less fantastic but the only possible theory, if only for the reason that, taken to the forest, Anastasia would have bled to death before anybody would have been able to smuggle her out to safety.

I hope that my readers will, in like manner, give preference to logical deductions from the evidence I am offering them rather than to preconceived notions based on ostensible probabilities. Should they do so, they will, perhaps, also accept my own verdict that Mrs. Tschaikovsky is Grand Duchess Anastasia, as not only the more probable but indeed the only possible one.

Paradoxically enough, I have found that the popular

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hatred of injustice has also served as a cause for the wide-spread disbelief in Anastasia's identity. I am not saying this in any sarcastic sense. Most people do hate to see some grave injustice committed and feel it their duty to do something about it. At the same time the vast majority have so many cares of their own that they prefer not to worry about other people, if they can help it.

Often enough we can escape that unpleasant necessity by assuming that the sufferers in our midst either do not suffer as badly as they themselves, or their friends, claim, or else have fully deserved their suffering. In the present case, it is so much simpler to say, "Oh, that Mrs. Tschaikovsky is just another impostor," and thus feel free of any obligation of going to her assistance, than to start worrying about her and perhaps be actually drawn into her case.

To those of my readers who belong to that latter category, I should like to point out that they can be of real help to the unfortunate Grand Duchess Anastasia without doing anything except admitting without fear the fact of her identity. The opinion of each of us constitutes a part of what is known as public opinion and the force of public opinion is great. Many a wrong has been righted by that force alone.

G. B.

*West Hempstead,
Long Island, N. Y.*

CAST OF ROYAL CHARACTERS

WITH A BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THEIR FAMILY RELATIONSHIP

NICHOLAS I, *Emperor of Russia from 1825 to 1855*

EMPRESS ALEXANDRA, *wife of Nicholas I and daughter of King Frederick William III of Prussia*

ALEXANDER II, *Emperor of Russia from 1855 to 1881, first cousin of Emperor William I, the Great, of Germany*

EMPRESS MARIE, *wife of Alexander II, born a Princess of Hessen Darmstadt*

ALEXANDER III, *Emperor of Russia from 1881 to 1894*

EMPRESS MARIE, *wife of Alexander III, born Princess Dagmar of Denmark, referred to in this book as the Empress Dowager, sister of King Frederick VIII of Denmark King George I of Greece and Queen Alexandra of England, mother of Emperor Nicholas II*

NICHOLAS II, *Emperor of Russia from 1894 to 1917, first cousin of King George V of England*

EMPRESS ALEXANDRA, *wife of Nicholas II, born a Princess of Hessen Darmstadt, granddaughter of Queen Victoria of England, first cousin of Emperor William II of Germany*

CZAREVICH ALEXIS, *only son and heir of Emperor Nicholas II*

Grand Duchesses	OLGA	} daughters of Nicholas II
	TATIANA	
	MARIE	
	ANASTASIA	

The Woman Who Rose Again

Grand Duchesses	XENIA	} sisters of Nicholas II, aunts of Anastasia
	OLGA	

GRAND DUKE ALEXANDER *husband of Grand Duchess Xenia, grandson of Nicholas I, author of "Once a Grand Duke," etc*

PRINCESS XENIA, *former Mrs William B Leeds, a great granddaughter of Emperor Nicholas I of Russia, granddaughter of King George I of Greece, niece of Grand Duke Alexander, sec*

CAST OF ROYAL CHARACTERS

- ond cousin of Emperor Nicholas II on her father's side and sec
ond cousin of Grand Duchess Anastasia on her mother's side*
- Grand Dukes CYRIL } sons of Grand Duke Vladimir, grand
 BORIS } sons of Alexander II, first cousins of
 ANDREW } Nicholas II.
- GRAND DUKE NICHOLAS, *Russian Commander in Chief at the be
ginning of the World War, grandson of Nicholas I, first cousin,
once removed, of Nicholas II*
- GRAND DUCHESS ANASTASIA, *wife of Grand Duke Nicholas, daugh
ter of King Nicholas I of Montenegro, sister of the present Queen
of Italy*
- GRAND DUCHESS MARIE, *daughter of Grand Duke Paul, grand
daughter of Alexander II, first cousin of Nicholas II, author of
"The Education of a Princess"*
- PRINCE GEORGE ROMANOVSKY, *Duke of Leuchtenberg, great grand
son of Napoleon's step son, Eugene de Beauharnais and of Em
peror Nicholas I of Russia, second cousin of Nicholas II*
- ERNST LUDWIG, *Grand Duke of Hessen Darmstadt, brother of Em
press Alexandra of Russia, uncle of Grand Duchess Anastasia*
- PRINCESS IRENE OF PRUSSIA, *sister of Empress Alexandra of Russia
sister-in law of Emperor William II of Germany, aunt and god
mother of Grand Duchess Anastasia*
- PRINCE WALDEMAR of Denmark, *brother of Empress Marie of Rus
sia and Queen Alexandra of England*
- CROWN PRINCE FREDERICK WILLIAM, *son of Emperor William II
of Germany*
- PRINCE CHRISTOPHER of Greece, *son of King George I of Greece,
first cousin of Nicholas II of Russia uncle of Princess Xenia and
step father of Xenia's former husband, William B Leeds*
- PRINCE ERNST FREDERICK of Saxe Altenburg, *cousin of Grand
Duchess Constantine of Russia, cousin of Grand Duke Ernst
Ludwig of Hessen Darmstadt*

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THE MEETING

FOR nine years I had believed—nay, known—her to be dead. And now she stood before me. Her luminous blue eyes looked straight into mine and her small beautiful hand, with long tapering fingers, was approaching my lips in that almost automatic gesture of hers I knew so well. So had her hand approached my lips the very first time we met, for, although we were but children then, and she by eleven months my junior, she was a Grand Duchess—the daughter of my Emperor—and I a hereditary Nobleman of the Russian Empire. And so we were both observant of etiquette.

“Anastasia!”

They were all lovely beyond words, the four daughters of Emperor Nicholas II—Olga, Tatiana, Marie, and Anastasia. One day each of them picked a flower and gave it to my father; and my father put the four flowers together and took them to a jeweller who made an exact facsimile of them in coloured enamel. The jeweller had surpassed himself and his reproduction looked as real as if the actual flowers had mysteriously hardened into a solid ornament.

“What better symbol of the Grand Duchesses could there be than those flowers?” Father said often. “For they are, in truth, like beautiful flowers.”

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And so they were. Nor would I have dared to admit to anyone that I was more devoted to one than to the other of the four sisters. But in actual fact it was Anastasia—"the Little One" as everybody called her—who was the dearest to me. She was almost my own age and I saw more of her than the others. We seemed to have many interests and ideas in common and she was always sparkling with such delightful mischief and doing things in such an unexpected and amazingly funny manner.

Once, when I drew for her the picture of a little brown she-bear in a blue skirt, trying to steal a pot of honey from her mother's pantry, Anastasia exclaimed:

"Fie! What a lovely little atrocity! But I hate sneaks! Do have her punished! Let that pot of honey turn over on her head and gum up all her fur!"

And so it happened and the lovely little atrocity was duly punished for her misdeeds.

Did Anastasia herself never deserve punishment? On the contrary, she undoubtedly held the record for punishable deeds in her family, for in naughtiness she was a true genius. Only she always perpetrated her crimes in the presence of many witnesses, which really made them the worse. But then Anastasia hated sneaks and had never been one herself.

To say that the Grand Duchesses were beautiful, in the classical sense, would not be true. Their features did not possess the perfect regularity prescribed by the Greeks. But attractive—one is tempted to say, bewitching—they certainly were; and they all possessed that indefinable charm of personality and manner which is so much more important than classical beauty.

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They had both grace and graciousness, rare even in those days of polite demeanor and courtly etiquette.

The discipline in the Imperial Family was much stricter than in most families, even of the aristocracy. I had been taught from my earliest childhood that few things are so unattractive, especially in children and youths, as a slovenly bearing. In daytime I hardly dared to look at beds, couches, and other furniture meant for physical relaxation; it was only ailing ladies or very old people, so I was told, who could permit themselves to lie down or recline in the middle of the day. Young people were supposed to stand erect and sit upright, keep their arms and legs in place, and otherwise attract no attention to themselves—especially unfavourable.

I obeyed all such rules as best I could, and among our other friends had no cause for feeling at all ashamed of my manners. But among the children of the Sovereigns I became immediately and painfully aware of my own awkwardness and lack of proper training.

They always held themselves as erect as soldiers on parade. When seated they would never recline against the back of the chair or cross their legs, as I was wont to do. Nor would they allow their arms to dangle as many of us did, but always held them in position with their hands joined on their laps. Yet they never appeared strained, artificial, or in the least affected. Their poses, their movements, their gestures were natural and free as though innate, which indeed they were. Besides, they had been trained from so early an age that

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even their acquired manners had become second nature to them

They had also been brought up in the clear understanding that such homage and respect, as was rendered them was due to their status as children of the Emperor and not merely as persons; and because of their status they had to be particularly careful not to give offence to other people. In consequence, they utterly lacked the silly airs common to people who imagine that their dignity would suffer from a friendly and natural attitude towards their inferiors. Dignified they were—extremely so—but with a dignity completely unconscious, and for this very reason the more impressive

Indeed, their modesty was at times excessive and led to embarrassing incidents. I remember the disappointment of my eldest brother, Dimitriy, after his first ball in his new capacity as Chamber Page. He had hoped so much to dance with the Grand Duchesses, but they had given no indication that they wanted to dance with him and he had not dared to invite them. And on the following morning Grand Duchess Olga said to my father:

"I was waiting for Dimitriy to invite me for a dance, but he didn't; and he dances so well."

I have never heard any of them make a direct request. They knew that to the members of their entourage their requests meant commands, and they did not want to give commands. They had, therefore, the habit of asking for things in a most indirect way, as if expressing an abstract and rather timid hope. Often enough the person to whom the request happened to be

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addressed, failed to guess that it was through him that such a hope was expected to materialize.

The only thing which disconcerted me at the beginning of my acquaintance with the Sovereigns' children, was their manner of speech. The Emperor himself spoke very clear and correct Russian. The Empress had a good command of the language, but aside from a distinct accent, she spoke it with a rigidity and careful choice of expressions that instantly betrayed her foreign birth.

But the Grand Duchesses and the Czarevich spoke not only fluently but so rapidly that at first I was hardly able to understand them. In addition to this, they had an accent which seemed English when they spoke in Russian and Russian when they spoke in English, and in actual fact was an accent quite their own. Neither before nor since have I ever heard anybody talk with that strange and charming accent. In time, however, I became quite accustomed to it. Their voices were very musical—voices clearly meant for singing; indeed, they all liked to sing, especially Tatiana and Anastasia.

The Czarevich Alexis was a person apart from the rest, even in the eyes of his own sisters. To begin with, he was the future Emperor, a fact which he himself seemed to realise fully. His sisters certainly did. They were not even allowed to call him other than by his full first name "Alexei" because, as father explained to me, the Emperor had found his own family nickname, "Niki," a cause of much embarrassment in his mature years. It had even become a not insignificant weapon in the hands of the revolutionaries, who con-

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cocted many silly stories about "Niki" and "Willy," meaning the Russian and German Emperors.

Personally, too, Alexis required special attention and care because of his hæmophilia, which caused him such frequent terrible pains and kept him in bed for weeks at a stretch. Both in the Imperial Family and among the courtiers there seemed to exist a sort of cult of the little Alexis, born out of a combination of the respect for his position and pity for his suffering. Besides, he also had a rare charm, and in spite of his illness he was an exceptionally handsome, intelligent, and vivacious boy. While I fully shared the general devotion to him, his manners seemed to me considerably worse than those of his sisters and his restlessness rather depressing.

As for the four Grand Duchesses, they were indeed like lovely flowers, but there was something about the smallest of the four flowers that gave it a particularly irresistible fascination.

This was not due to her beauty, for Anastasia was less beautiful than her sisters. She was small in size and her features were irregular. Her nose was rather long and her mouth quite wide. She had a small straight chin which lacked almost entirely the usual curve under the lower lip. But her eyes—blue, luminous eyes, always sparkling with humour—were truly beautiful.

It was from her father that she had inherited those eyes. I have never met a person, who was introduced to the Emperor for the first time, who did not immediately comment on the beauty of his eyes. Lovely too was Anastasia's hair—blond with a slightly reddish

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lustre, wavy and soft as silk. In childhood she wore it loose, with a large ribbon perched on the top of her head, which looked like a giant butterfly just ready to fly away.

At first glance she impressed one as a picture of innocence and model behaviour. Very strait-laced and prim she appeared when she entered the room, holding herself as erect as all her sisters did, her head slightly bent forward, a very grave expression in her blue eyes. But usually, the more serious she looked, the more certain it was that some mischievous idea was brewing in her head, and in a few minutes the fun would begin.

It was through the game of tick-tack-toe that I won for the first time Anastasia's approval, indeed, respect. I had just been introduced to her when she asked me:

"Do you play tick-tack-toe?"

"I do, Your Imperial Highness," I answered.

"Then let us play," she said. "You could never win a game from me."

"Why not?" I enquired, although strictly speaking, one was not supposed to put any questions to Imperial personages.

"Because I have a system," Anastasia said gravely. "Nobody can win a game of tick-tack-toe from me."

"I shall be glad to try," I said.

She did have a system—a very good system, in fact, and I lost two or three games; but at the same time I understood the system. It was good, but not perfect, and I quickly devised a counter-system which made it inoperative. Anastasia was quite bewildered. She shook her head, verified every move and kept playing game after game, but could no longer achieve anything

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better than a tie. She was, however, a good loser and quite as ready to laugh at herself as at others. Thus she not only admitted that her system had failed, but when her sister, Marie, in her turn, invited me to play tick-tack-toe, she said with solemnity:

"Beware, Marie! For he plays well!"

Then there were my animal drawings. Anastasia had known them long before we had actually met, for father often used to take my pictures to the palace. She liked them very much and now wanted to see how I made them.

But technical problems could not hold her attention for long. While Marie continued to work hard in an effort to copy one of my bears, Anastasia became engrossed in the story which my pictures illustrated and proceeded to develop it further, in her own way. But I must confess that as an author she did not impress me very much. The story, as she developed it, was funny enough, but it also became more absurd; while my own literary ambitions were always of a serious nature.

Even so, my drawings remained a common source of interest for Anastasia and myself, not only because they were funny and Anastasia loved everything funny, but also because my animals were always dressed in military uniforms. Anastasia adored uniforms. It pleased her particularly that my uniforms, whether real or imaginary, were always true to form and consistent. She prided herself on her knowledge of all the technical terms for the many complicated military insignia, and the exact manner in which the different weapons, decorations, and other paraphernalia were to be worn. It so happened that I was equally interested and well in-

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formed on the subject, so that no matter how she tried, Anastasia could not catch me in any mistake. But instead of being disappointed, she felt the greater respect for my erudition.

But to trick me in some way she never ceased trying. Once, when playing hide and seek, Anastasia announced that she had found a place where I would never be able to find her. She actually hid herself cleverly enough, behind a heavy curtain, its folds arranged in a manner which entirely concealed her presence, but she had failed to notice that the curtain did not quite reach the floor. I saw the tip of her white shoe and began to laugh.

"I don't even have to look for you," I called to her. "You are standing behind that curtain!"

She burst into laughter and admitted her defeat, but asked me to tell her how I had discovered her hiding place so easily.

"Because you don't know how to hide properly," I began to tease her. "I could see your shoe under the curtain."

"I shall hide again and you will not find me this time!" Anastasia declared.

I closed my eyes and waited for the appointed length of time, but no sooner did I open them and look around the room, than I saw, once more, Anastasia's shoe under the curtain.

"Oh, I can see your shoe again," I said. "This is no way to hide. You are behind that curtain."

But Anastasia did not burst into laughter nor come out of her hiding place. I ran towards the curtain and pulled it aside. The shoe was there, but not Anastasia.

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And then I heard her laugh behind the door where presently I found her standing on one foot so as not to soil her white stocking. I hastened to bring the shoe and she graciously allowed me to put it back on her foot, while continuing to shake with laughter and tell me how very easy it was to fool me.

The theory of so many modern educators that a strict upbringing and insistence on good manners serves to make the child a victim of repression could find no confirmation in the Emperor's children. In spite of the perfection of their manners and bearing, they were not only very gay and full of mischief, but wont to indulge in games which to me seemed decidedly dangerous, such for instance, as rolling down the stairs in a wooden boat. Anastasia and the Czarevich, especially, were fond of such exploits and seemed always attracted by the highest pieces of furniture from which they were most likely to crash.

In my father's stateroom where we often played while on the Imperial yacht there was an electric switch placed for some strange reason almost under the very ceiling and very hard to turn on. One day at the request of father, who happened to be ill, I attempted to turn on that switch, but found it quite impossible, the more so because in order to reach it I had to climb on a chair and was afraid to lose my balance.

Anastasia began to tease me as usual and declared that she certainly could turn on that switch. I begged her in vain not to try. She could not reach that switch, even standing on a chair. But she engaged Marie's help and Marie climbed on the chair and Anastasia climbed on Marie. I stood frozen with horror and

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GRAND DUCHESS ANASTASIA
aboard the Imperial Yacht *THE
STANDARD* in 1914

From a print that was given to her
in Germany in 1922 and which was
sent to the Dan sh Ambassador Zafle



GRAND DUCHESS ANASTASIA
AFTER HER CRITICAL ILLNESS IN 1925

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then it naturally happened. A moment later I felt as if the whole world was crashing about my head, and the daughters of my Emperor—of whom there appeared to be a dozen, rather than only two—were falling on me from all sides.

The thought of letting them fall to the floor seemed intolerable and so I tried to catch them both—or was it they who caught me? I attempted to support Marie with one arm and Anastasia with the other, and hold the chair with my foot. But Marie was quite heavy and Anastasia's silky hair got into my eyes, my nose, and my mouth, and nothing it seemed could keep the chair in place.

Even so, I must have absorbed the shock to some extent, for when we finally got disentangled nobody appeared hurt, and Marie and Anastasia were bursting with laughter, while I had the satisfaction of pointing out to Anastasia that she had boasted in vain of her ability to turn on that switch.

It was during the same illness of my father, on board the Imperial yacht, that the Empress came daily to his stateroom, to be examined by him. A few minutes before Her Majesty's visit I always helped father to wash his hands. Father had a peculiar wash bowl made of glass, and whenever I brought it out Anastasia began to laugh and assure me that it was not a wash bowl but a container for curdled milk. In fact, curdled milk—one of the favourite Russian dishes—was usually served in glass bowls.

At this time the Imperial yacht lay at anchor in the Bay of Sebastopol. The day after my sister and I had

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Left the town, Anastasia appeared at the proper hour in father's stateroom and asked

"Where is your curdled milk container? It is time for you to wash your hands and now that Gleb is gone I am in charge of the curdled milk container"

Father protested in vain that he would never let her perform such menial services for him. Anastasia found the curdled milk container and helped father wash his hands, just as she had seen me do it, and cut father's continued protestations short with the retort

"If Gleb can do it for you, why can't I?"

Like her mother and sisters, Anastasia was very skilful at embroidery, and one of my most cherished possessions was a long runner she had made for me of ceru linen, embroidered with blue flowers on black stems. I kept that runner on a mahogany stand for my icons and crucifixes, of which I had quite a collection, and felt not a little proud whenever some of our friends began to admire it and wonder who could have made such a lovely piece of work. They were much astonished when informed that it was the work of the little Anastasia

But if Anastasia was a talented, indeed, a brilliant child, a good scholar she was not. She did well only the things which interested her, and her impish disposition made her lose interest in things which she was compelled to do.

Even so, her teachers appeared to be as much under her spell as virtually everybody at the Court was. But no teacher surpassed Mr. Petrov, the teacher of Russian, in his tender devotion to all the Emperor's children and especially to the Czarevich and Anastasia

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He fairly worshipped his pupils; yet it was he who once became the victim of a joke on his pupil's part, which was not without a touch of cruelty.

Mr. Petrov was a very sentimental gentleman, of medium height, plump, with a round face, round eyes, round nose, round mouth and curly grey hair. His neat rotundity had earned him the nickname "Pompon." As a high official of the Educational Department of the Ministry of War, he was always dressed in a peculiar semi-military costume and had a dark blue overcoat with red lining and silver buttons. Altogether he was a very charming, yet somewhat comical personage.

One day, on his way to the palace, Mr. Petrov slipped and sat down heavily in the middle of a big puddle. It must have been a very funny sight, and a young lady who happened to pass him at the moment, found herself unable to suppress a giggle. Highly incensed, the usually good natured "Pompon" shouted to the young lady: "Fool!"

By the time he reached the palace, however, Mr. Petrov's anger had passed. And the more he thought of it the more he regretted his rudeness to a lady, who according to him was not only young but also very beautiful. He related the incident to the Grand Duchesses, and reproached himself so bitterly that they began to console him. After all, they said, the lady should not have laughed at him and no doubt realised herself that he had every reason to call her a fool. The Grand Duchesses even expressed the opinion that if the lady was a real lady she would certainly find out who Mr. Petrov was and offer him some kind of apol-

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ogy, which would enable him to apologise to her in his turn.

A day or so later, while leaving his house in the morning, Mr. Petrov was greatly surprised to find a beautiful bouquet of flowers on his doorstep. He looked in vain for a card or any sign of identification. But on the following morning he received another bouquet; and every morning thereafter the flowers appeared mysteriously at his door.

Still obsessed with the thought of the beautiful young lady, whom he had called a fool, Mr. Petrov began to wonder whether those bouquets did not represent a fragrant, if anonymous, apology on her part. Again he consulted the Grand Duchesses, and they all said that his guess was undoubtedly correct. Had they not told him that the lady would try to apologise to him in some way?

And then the fatal thing happened: the "Pompon" fell in love. He walked about with a beatific smile and could no longer talk of anything but the lady who was sending him such wonderful flowers, and the day, he felt certain would come, when she would finally disclose her identity to him. But he waited in vain for that day. The bouquets continued to arrive every morning, but none of them contained the slightest clue as to the sender.

Finally, Mr. Petrov could stand the strain no longer. The flowers were always brought to his door in the small hours of the morning while he was still sound asleep. One night he decided not to sleep; he seated himself behind the entrance door and waited for hours. At last he heard footsteps approaching his door. He

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threw the door open and, just as he had expected, he saw a gardener holding the usual bouquet.

"Where do these flowers come from?" Mr. Petrov shouted.

"Delivered to Your Excellency on orders of Their Imperial Highnesses the Grand Duchesses!" the gardener reported.

The poor "Pompon" looked quite crestfallen for several days after that discovery of his flowers' origin. But he did have a good sense of humour and could not help laughing at himself. Besides, he was quite unable to bear a grudge against his adored pupils for long.

Whether that particular joke had originated in Anastasia's fertile mind I do not know, but it easily might have.

My own relations with Anastasia in those days were uniformly pleasant. But while we saw the Grand Duchesses in the streets and in the park virtually every day, often attended the same church, met them at parades, bazaars and other public functions, it was not very often—and only in the Crimea—that we played with them. Those occasions were sufficiently infrequent for Anastasia to be always pleased to see us, the more so because she had only very few playmates.

But from the occupants of the palace we knew that Anastasia was not only the naughtiest, but also the most temperamental of the four Grand Duchesses. Indeed, she was quite autocratic and at times difficult to handle, especially because of all the members of her family she seemed the least interested in what outsiders would think of her; also, she completely lacked the ability of assuming special manners for a given occasion. She

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was always her own natural self, incapable of any pretence, and therefore quite likely to fly into a temper or perform some fantastic prank at the most inopportune moment.

By the same token, however, she never attempted to conceal her joys and affections. Altogether, it would have been difficult to imagine a more lovable and wholly natural child than that little Princess, who romped through the ancient palaces of the Russian Emperors, like a gay sunbeam, spreading laughter and good cheer wherever she went. How many times have I seen some solemn courtier suddenly lose all his solemnity and burst into laughter with the exclamation:

"No, but Anastasia Nikolaevna is truly inimitable! Just imagine what she did to-day. . . ." And then he would give a report of Anastasia's latest deed or repartee.

It happens so often that fate ironically places the wrong person in a given position. So many people born to wealth do not know what to do with it; so many people born to power do not know how to use it; so many princes look and behave like truck drivers; so many sensitive and gifted human beings have to slave at stupid and brutalising jobs.

By contrast, no person could better fit the position of a princess than did Grand Duchess Anastasia. She was at once so very human and so unconsciously regal. She possessed such an inexhaustible joy of life, such a keen sense of humour, such a genius for delighting people with her brilliant wit and spontaneous kindness. To such a person who could ever begrudge the power and wealth that a daughter of the Russian Emperor was ex-

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pected to enjoy? Who could doubt that she would make the best possible use of them and go through life, always happy herself, always giving happiness to those around her?

But the happy life to which Anastasia seemed predestined was never to become hers. She was only thirteen years old when the war broke out. In a few weeks nothing remained of the splendour and gaiety of the Imperial Court. Instead of attending balls, parades and other brilliant functions, society ladies including the Empress and her two eldest daughters, were now working in hospitals as plain nurses. Marie and Anastasia, too young for such work, were made patronesses of a small hospital. They also gave much of their time to the various charitable activities necessitated by the war.

Anastasia took her new duties seriously, worked hard and seemed quite proud of her newly acquired usefulness. But such work could hardly be called amusing and brought her in touch with much suffering and misery to which she could not remain indifferent.

In the Imperial residence there hardly remained a single family which had not lost one or several of its members. News from the front was seldom consoling. Dissatisfaction with the existing régime grew steadily and soon even the Emperor's nearest relatives began to intrigue against him. And Anastasia was no longer a small child. She knew and understood a great deal, she realised how heavy a burden her parents were carrying, how greatly they were worried. She could not ignore the heavy cloud that hung over her father's

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Empire, the storm that was gathering around his very palace.

It was the joy of life that Anastasia craved, but there was little joy in the world in those days. Yet how normal—almost pleasant—they appeared to us all later, in retrospect, after we had been engulfed by the new and incomparably greater horror of the revolution. Nor could the suffering of anybody at that time compare with the suffering of the Sovereigns and their children.

Then it was that the Grand Duchesses showed that they were much more than four lovely flowers. Their patience, courage, and self-control, their constant efforts to help their parents forget, if only for a few moments, the nightmare of their new existence, revealed in those charming girls a true greatness, bewildering even to the people most devoted to them.

"This evening again," father would often tell me in the days of our Siberian exile, "I heard the Grand Duchesses whisper to one another: 'Papa is very sad. We have to cheer him up.'"

The Empress's lady-in-waiting, Baroness Buxhoeveden, writes in her memoirs that during the first period of their exile in Tobolsk the Grand Duchesses did not seem to realise the great danger they were in and even staged plays, Anastasia in particular revealing a great talent for comedy.

I am inclined to believe that it was the good Baroness who failed to realise what indomitable courage the daughters of her Sovereigns possessed. They knew only too well what danger they were in, and Anastasia's ingenious comedies, which time and again made even

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the Empress, in spite of the dreadful reality, laugh herself to tears, reached the very height of heroism.

In the spring of 1918, first Their Majesties, Grand Duchess Marie, Prince Dolgoroukov and my father, then the Czarevich with his three sisters and several members of the suite, were transferred to Ekaterinburg, while my sister and I were left in Tobolsk.

On the eve of the Grand Duchess' departure I went past their house, in the hope that some of them might be standing at the window. And indeed, Anastasia stood by the window and seeing me began to smile and wave her hand. And I took off my cap and bowed to her, which so infuriated the bolshevik sentries that they started shooting at me. It was lucky that they were very poor shots.

It was the last time I saw Anastasia in Siberia. And to see her thus, alone, surrounded by a gang of drunken cutthroats, was well-nigh unendurable. What miracle, I wondered, could now save her and her whole family from a fate I hardly dared to picture.

And for nine years thereafter I believed with all the certainty of knowledge that no miracle had saved any of them. I was convinced that on the tragic night of July 17, 1918, not only the Sovereigns, Czarevich Alexis, and my father, but also all the four Grand Duchesses had been killed and their bodies cremated in a forest.

But as I was to discover eventually, one miracle did occur on the night of July 17. When the bodies of the victims were being removed from the cellar where the massacre had taken place, one of the soldiers noticed

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For many months Anastasia remained critically ill in consequence of her wounds, regaining complete consciousness for only short periods of time. When her health began to improve she discovered with horror that she was pregnant. Alexander Tschaikovsky having confessed his guilt, Anastasia demanded that he marry her, and he did take her to some religious ceremony in a Roman Catholic church, which may or may not have been a wedding. Anastasia's child—a son—was placed by the Tschaikovskys in an orphan asylum.

Shortly after his supposed wedding, Alexander Tschaikovsky was killed in the streets of Bucharest and the Grand Duchess asked his companion, Sergei, to take her to Germany where she hoped to find her god-mother, Princess Irene of Prussia. After many hardships and misadventures—for they had no passports and had to cross every frontier on foot—Anastasia and Sergei Tschaikovsky reached Berlin on February 16, 1920. On the following night, in a mood of despondency, the Grand Duchess left her hotel and after wandering through the city threw herself, or fell, into the Landwehr Canal.

Rescued by the police, she was taken to a hospital and as soon as she regained consciousness, was subjected to a rigorous examination. Having lived for nineteen months in constant dread of capture by the bolsheviks, Anastasia refused to answer a single question and in consequence was transferred to a mental institution in Dalldorf. There she remained in a public ward with some twenty mental cases for two and a half years.

As soon as she was strong enough Anastasia wrote

BRIDGE OVER THE LINDWEHR CANAL (Inset) GRAND DUCHESS ANASTASIA IN 1926



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that Anastasia was still alive and succeeded in smuggling her out to safety.

To safety—yes, if a life of utter misery, suffering, humiliation and persecution, in short, a life of unrelieved martyrdom, could be called a life of safety. Yet, on that day in May 1927, when Grand Duchess Anastasia in flesh and blood stood once more before me and brought her hand to my lips, I could at first think of nothing except that she whom I had believed—nay, known—to be dead, was alive; that I could again see her and touch her and hear her voice and look into her blue, luminous eyes; that a miracle had saved her—our beloved “Little One.”

“The woman who rose again”—for such is the Greek meaning of the name Anastasia—who in the days of the Grand Duchess’s happy childhood had ever suspected what a prophecy her name contained?

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MY FIRST meeting with Grand Duchess Anastasia after her reappearance among the living took place in the Bavarian castle, 'Seon, where she was staying at the time as the guest of Duke George of Leuchtenberg. Like the proverbial fool who rushes in where angels fear to tread, I had arrived at a time when the storm of intrigues of which the unfortunate Grand Duchess was the unwitting cause and victim reached a new climax with the attempt to prove that she was a demented Polish peasant, Francisca Schanzkovska by name.

While I myself have gained a complete picture of them only gradually, Anastasia's experiences, up to the time of my meeting with her in Castle Seon, may be summarised as follows:

The soldier to whom the Grand Duchess owed her life was a Pole from the vicinity of Ekaterinburg, known to us under the assumed name of Alexander Tschaikovsky. Helped by one Sergei, supposedly his brother, who served in the same detachment, Tschaikovsky carried the unconscious Anastasia to his home, and, taking along two women—presumably his mother and sister—fled from Ekaterinburg in a peasant cart. After a journey of about four and a half months the Tschaikovskys finally crossed the Roumanian frontier and settled in Bucharest.

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a letter in English to her godmother, Princess Irene, but the doctor never mailed it. One of the nurses, however, who happened to be a Russian, recognised in Anastasia a daughter of her Emperor, and to her Anastasia admitted her identity in strictest secrecy. Then another Russian woman recognised her and the police who kept investigating the identity of Miss Unknown—as Anastasia had been registered in Dalldorf—also arrived at the conclusion that she was actually Grand Duchess Anastasia of Russia.

Rumours began to spread and soon reached Copenhagen, where the Russian Dowager Empress, Marie, lived at the time with her youngest daughter, Grand Duchess Olga. Through some mistake, the information which reached Copenhagen was to the effect that not Anastasia, but Tatiana was languishing in Dalldorf. Baroness Buxhoeveden was sent from Copenhagen to investigate. She dragged Anastasia rudely out of her bed, declared, "She is too short for Tatiana," and returned to Copenhagen.

Shortly afterwards a Mrs. Zinaida Tolstoy, who had known the Emperor's children intimately, also went to Dalldorf and at once recognised in Miss Unknown Grand Duchess Anastasia. Thereupon a Russian refugee offered Anastasia his hospitality. She was released from Dalldorf in 1922, her official designation changed from that of Miss Unknown to Mrs. Anastasia Tschaikevsky. Almost immediately she fell ill with pneumonia; and it was only during that illness, when told by the doctor that she had little chance to recover, that Grand Duchess Anastasia at last admitted openly the fact of her identity.

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In the same year she was visited by her godmother, Princess Irene, who offered to take her to her home. But Anastasia was so overcome by emotion that she could do little but weep. Besides, she did not know that Irene had never received her letter from Dalldorf, and could not understand how her godmother could have permitted her to suffer for so long. She declined the invitation and Irene left, declaring that she would have nothing to do with so ill-mannered a person.

For almost three years thereafter Grand Duchess Anastasia led the existence of a helpless pawn in the hands of scheming Russian refugees, who each in turn took her to his house, in the hope of obtaining some personal advantage in case of her formal recognition, only to refuse her further hospitality when this hope failed to materialise. In all those years her health was in a critical condition. Her many wounds had never healed properly and in one of them tuberculosis of the bone had set in. At least three times since her appearance in Berlio, doctors had given up all hope of her recovery, and for weeks at a stretch she lay half-conscious from fever and excruciating pain.

Her nerves, needless to say, were completely shattered, and she had developed a not unknown form of neurosis, which made her insist that she had forgotten both Russian and English—the only two languages of which she had real command. In Dalldorf she had still spoken Russian, and under anæsthetics or in delirium she usually spoke English. Yet when fully conscious, she insisted on talking in German which she knew poorly. Anastasia's refusal to speak either Rus-

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sian or English naturally became a formidable weapon in the hands of her opponents.

In the meantime, however, a number of people persisted in their efforts to bring Anastasia's case once more to the attention of her relatives, and in 1925 the brother of the Russian Empress Dowager, Prince Waldemar of Denmark, began to contribute to her support and requested the Danish Ambassador in Berlin, M. Zahle, to take care of her.

A little later Anastasia was visited by her aunt, Grand Duchess Olga of Russia, her Swiss tutor, M. Gillard, and the latter's wife who had been Anastasia's nurse. They seemed to have recognised her instantly and paid her several visits. Although again very sick and suffering agonies, Anastasia during that brief period appeared almost happy. She talked with her aunt of the past and gladly answered all her questions. Did she know by any chance anything about a fortune left by the Emperor in England, Grand Duchess Olga wanted to know among other things. There were persistent rumours about such a fortune, but all efforts to locate it had so far proved futile.

Yes, Anastasia said, she did know about that fortune. It was shortly before his tragic death that her father had told her and her sisters that were any of them to escape they should claim the money kept for them in England. His own funds the Emperor had used to pay for the munitions purchased in England during the war. But he had not touched the money of his daughters. It was a camouflaged account and the Emperor had given his daughters detailed explanations which Anastasia now hastened to impart to her aunt. After

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that conversation Grand Duchess Olga asked Anastasia's doctor how long he expected Anastasia to live. Not over a month, the doctor said.

Olga and the Gillards left Berlin, but began at once to correspond with Anastasia and her nurse, Mrs. von Rathlef-Keilmann. The tone of their letters left no doubt that they were convinced of Anastasia's true identity. Olga also sent Anastasia several presents. Then, for no apparent reason, the correspondence ceased.

Meanwhile, Mrs. von Rathlef wrote to Anastasia's maternal uncle, the Grand Duke Ernst Ludwig of Hessen-Darmstadt, asking him to visit his niece. As a proof of her identity, Mrs. von Rathlef informed the Grand Duke that Anastasia insisted that she had seen him for the last time in Russia in 1916. It had been pointed out to her that this was not possible because in 1916 Russia was at war with Germany and the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt in command of a German army. But Anastasia had become quite angry and retorted that she knew whereof she spoke.

She did. So did the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt. Only very few people knew of the Grand Duke's trip to Russia in 1916; they were former high officials of the Imperial German Government and kept silent about it, because they knew that the Grand Duke had gone to Russia without the permission of the German High Command.

All this the naïve Mrs. Rathlef did not, of course, even suspect. Her reasoning was that if the Grand Duke had been in Russia in 1916, Anastasia's knowledge of the fact offered a perfect proof of her identity. No doubt, the Grand Duke himself reasoned

likewise. And he reasoned further that if Anastasia was not the only person to know of his trip to Russia, she was the only living witness who had actually seen him in Russia. It was no wonder, therefore, that—as some reports had it—Anastasia's uncle, upon reading Mrs. von Rathlef's letter, seized his head with both hands and exclaimed:

"This is a catastrophe!"

Then there was still another Grand Duke—Cyril of Russia. A first cousin of the Emperor, he had at the beginning of the revolution paraded with red banners and proclaimed himself a "free citizen of a free Russia." Apparently he had hoped that the grateful revolutionaries would proclaim him an Emperor. But they had not.

Now, in Germany, Cyril himself had bestowed the title of Emperor upon his own person. He, too, received reports about Grand Duchess Anastasia. She had spoken bitterly of his betrayal of her father—a betrayal which by now Cyril himself was eager to have the Russian monarchists forget. Worse than that, many of the latter were beginning to say that it was Anastasia—the only surviving child of the martyred Emperor Nicholas II—who should be placed on the Russian throne.

For a while all members of Royalty became completely and strangely silent on the subject of Grand Duchess Anastasia's identity. Then her friends learned with dismay that Grand Duchess Olga and her eldest sister, Xenia, Grand Duke Cyril, and the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt were all making statements to the effect that Grand Duchess Anastasia was an impos-

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tor Similar statements emanated from M Gillard, who had suddenly become a representative of the Grand Duke of Hessen Darmstadt, with a marked improvement in his financial circumstances

Exasperated, Mrs von Rathlef published a series of articles in defence of her patient, to whom she had become deeply attached Her articles were followed by another series, printed in the same newspapers and written by one Detective Knopf, in the employ of the Grand Duke of Hessen Darmstadt, and M Gillard, who tried to prove that Grand Duchess Anastasia was the demented Polish peasant, Francisca Schanzkovska It was a clumsy job, based on evidence self evidently planted or forged, and on testimony equally unreliable, but the scandal it produced was enormous -

Moreover, the police of Hessen Darmstadt began to exercise every effort to force on Anastasia the passport of the demented Francisca—a woman who had actually existed but disappeared from Berlin without trace in March 1920 With such a passport Anastasia could be locked up in an insane asylum for life, because Francisca had been officially adjudged incurably insane

Finally, the Danish Government ordered Ambassador Zahle to withdraw from all further participation in the case, and Anastasia would have remained in the streets had it not been for the hospitality of her distant relative, Duke George of Leuchtenberg

But even in castle Seon, as the Duke himself informed me on the very day of my arrival, Anastasia was by no means safe There had been attempts to kidnap and even poison her, and it was impossible to predict what her enemies were going to do next The

Duke himself seemed on the verge of a nervous collapse. He spoke of Anastasia, to whom he always referred as "the Little One," with true affection. It was obvious that he had no doubt as to her identity. He declined, however, to make any formal statement on the subject, on the ground that he was not competent to say anything definite because he had not known Anastasia in her childhood.

In general, most of Grand Duchess Anastasia's friends were afraid to acknowledge her formally. Until my own meeting with her, only three persons had done so. They were the Russian surgeon, Professor Rudnev; a German doctor, Theodor Eitel; and my sister. Having myself for a long time refused to believe that any member of the Imperial Family could have been rescued, I had at first attributed that reluctance of openly acknowledging Anastasia's identity to honest doubt. But the moment I saw Anastasia I not only recognised her myself, but began to wonder how anybody who had known her before the Revolution could have failed to recognise her.

Indeed, in spite of all the horrors she had gone through, Grand Duchess Anastasia had changed surprisingly little. She remained as small as she had been at seventeen, and had only grown very thin; in a way her slimness made her the more recognisable to me because, as I have said before, it was only shortly before the Revolution that she became rather stout.

To be sure, her features were drawn and because of it, her nose appeared even more prominent than before. Also, her upper jaw having been injured by the blow of a rifle butt, many of her teeth had to be extracted,

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and to hide their absence she kept compressing her lips or covering them altogether with her handkerchief. But a face so characteristic and unusual as Anastasia's could not fail to be recognised in spite of such minor changes. Her hair remained as blond, as wavy and silky as ever. But above all there were her eyes—those luminous, blue, truly bewitching eyes—unforgettable and unmistakable—which to me only two people in the whole world had possessed—Emperor Nicholas II of Russia and his youngest daughter, Grand Duchess Anastasia.

More than that, Anastasia was instantly recognisable not only as her own self, but also as a member of the Imperial Family. Her general appearance and bearing were unmistakably those of a Royal personage. Her family resemblance was striking. She was as obviously a descendant of the Russian Empress Dowager, Marie, as a child of Emperor Nicholas and Empress Alexandra. One could find in her as much resemblance to her Russian aunts as to her foreign cousins. She reminded one as much of the former Prince of Wales as of the German Crown Prince. In short, the fact that she was a Royal Princess could not, in my opinion, be doubted by anyone well acquainted with Royalty—not even necessarily Russian Royalty, since all the ruling families of Europe were so closely related.

Before coming to castle Seon I had read every available bit of information concerning the mysterious Mrs. Tschaikovsky. Much of that information acquired an entirely new meaning for me, now that I knew Mrs. Tschaikovsky to be Grand Duchess Anas-



THE EMPEROR AND THE EMPRESS WITH PHOTOGRAPH OF ANASTASIA TAKEN IN THE BALDWIN HOSPITAL, SHOWING THE STRIKING RESEMBLANCE TO BOTH PARENTS, WHICH LED TO HER FIRST IDENTIFICATION

tasia; not a little of it became obviously untrue, but I still had no reason to doubt the descriptions of Anastasia's mental and physical condition by the people who had seen her during the last few years. And all those descriptions had left on me the impression that Anastasia was now a pathetic wreck—broken in spirit as much as in body, with a memory badly impaired, hardly capable of coherent conversation. Those accounts also represented Anastasia as a person of great meekness, who wanted nothing but to be left in peace, and dreamed as a highest form of happiness of a quiet life in some rural retreat where she could do nothing but feed birds and cultivate flowers.

The Leuchtenbergs gave me a somewhat different picture of "the Little One." According to them, she actually could be very meek and touchingly kind, but broken in spirit she certainly was not, and at times she flew into a temper that made all the inhabitants of castle Secon shake in their shoes.

How very happy I was to hear that!

"But how could she be Anastasia with such a devilish temper?" the Duchess of Leuchtenberg asked me. "Everybody tells me that the Sovereigns were always so kind."

"Kind they were, most of the time," I agreed. "And so, according to you, is 'the Little One.' But if you think that Their Majesties—the Empress especially—never had fits of temper, you are very much mistaken. And of all their children precisely Anastasia was the most temperamental one."

"One thing I must say about her," the Duchess said. "I never heard her say a single rude word. No matter

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how vexed she is, she never uses any vulgar expressions. Yet she gets so angry at times that she becomes simply frightening. Her eyes acquire a perfectly fierce expression and she just trembles with anger, but never does she utter one vulgar word."

"What does she say when she is angry?" I enquired.

"All she usually says," the Duchess answered, "is: 'You are not fulfilling your duty. Do not forget, I am your Emperor's daughter!' Imagine the nerve that girl has. How do we know that she is our Emperor's daughter? Nobody has any duty towards her. Whatever people do for her is pure charity on their part. Besides, she must get over that business of Emperors and Emperors' daughters. There are no Emperors nowadays."

The Duchess of Leuchtenberg, *née* Princess Repnina, prided herself—it must be explained—on being an anarchist.

Of Duke George's many children, it was one of his daughters Baroness Meller-Zakomelsky, and her husband, who were particularly fond of Anastasia, as well as convinced of her identity, because the Baron had seen her occasionally before the revolution. The Baroness too, however, maintained that Anastasia was quite erratic, although at least one of her reasons for such an opinion made me chuckle.

"Just think of it," she said, "when 'the Little One' came here she declared that she had to have a bath every day. Isn't this a strange mania? We haven't a bathroom in the castle, but 'the Little One' persists in her wish and in some improvised tub scrubs herself all over every day."

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Anastasia was also said to be pathologically suspicious—another trait, by the way, she had inherited from her mother. And I myself became immediately convinced of it, for no sooner did I reach Castle Seen than Duke George's daughter-in-law informed me that Anastasia did not believe in my good intentions and flatly refused to receive me.

But on that particular occasion Anastasia's suspiciousness was not lacking in perceptivity. My study of her case had convinced me that whoever she was, there had to exist a well organised plot whereby either an impostor was being forced on the Imperial Family in the rôle of the resurrected Anastasia, or else the real Anastasia was being prevented from restoration to her civil and proprietary rights.

I was determined not only to discover what the actual plot was, but also do my best to expose it by giving it as much publicity as I could. I had been careful, however, not to tell anybody—not even my nearest relatives and friends—of this intention of mine. But the very first thing which Anastasia said upon learning of my wish to visit her was that she would not receive me, because I wanted to write about her in newspapers and she hated publicity and attributed all her recent troubles to it.

"Now you can see yourself that she is crazy," the Duchess of Leuchtenberg said to me after her daughter-in-law had reported Anastasia's suspicions about me. "Why should *you* write about her in newspapers?"

In the course of the following days, during which

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mentioned the Imperial residence of Czarskoe Selo, and her face acquired at once such a pained expression that I cursed myself inwardly and hastened to change the subject of our conversation.

What I wanted now to do above everything else, was to make the Grand Duchess smile. That she still could laugh I hardly dared to hope, but something of her old humour must have remained in her, I reflected. I began to tell all the funny stories I could remember; and another miracle happened: Anastasia's eyes suddenly lit up with that mischievous spark I remembered so well, her smile grew wider and in a few minutes she was laughing—laughing with her inimitable and irresistibly contagious laughter of a happy, carefree child.

I no longer wanted any proofs of her identity. Yet, unwilling by either of us and wholly unrealised by her, those proofs—now so unnecessary—began to crop up on every turn.

It started with my animal drawings which, incidentally, had already caused some excitement in the Leuchtenberg family. One day, at dinner, Baroness Meller said to me:

“‘The Little One’ does say incomprehensible things sometimes. Just now, for instance, before I went downstairs, she said to me: ‘I may see Gleb if he has brought his funny animals. I like them so much. Ask him whether he has his animals with him.’ God alone knows what she meant by that. It certainly makes no sense to me. What animals?”

I noticed that the Baroness was seriously perturbed by the fact that “the Little One’s” first message to me



PAGES FROM THE AUTHOR'S ANIMAL DRAWINGS
 TOP KING BLOWING SOAP BUBBLES DRAWN IN 1926 U.S.A.
 BOTTOM DRILLING RECRUITS FOR THE WHITE ARMY
 DRAWN IN SIBERIA 191

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every member of the Leuchtenberg family in turn tried to talk Anastasia into receiving me, that matter of publicity came up again and again.

"She told me," the Duke informed me one day, "that she may receive you, but only if I promise that you will not write about her in newspapers. I answered that I can make no promises on behalf of other people and that she should take up the matter with you personally. But what a fantastic idea! What makes her imagine that you want to write about her in newspapers?"

Later, not only I, but several others persons discovered in Anastasia an uncanny ability of guessing people's thoughts—an ability which bordered on true clairvoyance.

Very likely Anastasia would never have received me, had not Duke George had the happy idea of bringing about a supposedly accidental meeting between Anastasia and myself, in the entrance hall, on a day on which the Grand Duchess had to drive to the nearby town of Wasserburg.

Anastasia recognised me as instantly as I had recognised her, and apparently understood at once that I had come as a friend—not an enemy. She promised to see me on the following day, and the strange part of it was that in all our subsequent conversations she never said a word about newspapers to me. Again the Leuchtenbergs were puzzled. But I was not. Clearly enough, Anastasia could not have forgotten so easily her suspicion that I wanted to write about her in newspapers, but, having understood that she could trust me, she must have decided to let me act in my own way.

It was in her own room that the Grand Duchess received me for the first time. She did not feel well on that day and was reeling on a couch, looking very tired and nervous. But she greeted me with a smile, gave me her hand to kiss, and invited me and Baroness Meller, who had come to assist at our first conversation, to sit down.

I watched her, incredulous and fascinated. Her smile, the sound of her voice, her every gesture flooded my mind with endless memories—deeply disturbing, yet also so dear and joyful. Nor could I as yet grasp fully the fact that Anastasia had never been dead, that the tragic story of Mrs. Tschaikovsky was her story. Somehow I could not connect her with that legendary and unreal personage. She was so obviously, so completely her own self—the adored little Princess of my childhood days, the bewitching Anastasia. And what could Anastasia have in common with that unfortunate Mrs. Tschaikovsky? Anastasia had been killed, my emotions continued to insist, but must have arisen from the dead, for here she was before me, smiling at me, talking to me.

I do not remember how our conversation began. I only know that it was quite different from what I had planned when thinking of my first meeting with Mrs. Tschaikovsky. *It had been my intention* to ask her different questions, and guide in a conversation that would permit me to decide whether she was Anastasia or an impostor. Now I no longer needed those questions. Moreover, I knew that it would be criminal to ask her anything likely to stir up painful memories in her mind. It was by the purest accident that I once

sounded so silly. But her dismay changed to utter bewilderment when I said :

"I have brought a whole stack of them. What she evidently means are my funny drawings of animals, many of which I made for Anastasia especially."

"But this is perfectly remarkable!" Duke George exclaimed. "How could she have known that, if she is not Anastasia?"

"From my sister," I suggested.

"Your sister never said a word about them!" Duke George retorted. "Why, she never even mentioned either to 'the Little One' or to any of us the fact that you are an artist!"

On that occasion I remained somewhat unconvinced, but now, that I no longer needed to be convinced my animals led to another incident which would have been inexplicable, indeed, were Anastasia anybody except her own self.

I had brought with me both new drawings I had made in the United States and old ones made in Siberia, which my father had shown to the Imperial Family. As long as Anastasia was looking at my new drawings she kept laughing happily. As in her childhood, she went carefully over every uniform and satisfied herself that everything was correct and true to form. A picture of a parade pleased her immensely, because the soldiers were marching just as they were supposed to march, according to the regulations of the pre-revolutionary Russian army, with the various commanders each in his appointed place. Another picture, of a king and his cabinet blowing soap bubbles, sent her into gales of laughter.

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But the moment she came across one of my old pictures her laughter ceased, her eyes filled with tears, and for a long time *she looked at it in silence*. Finally she said:

"You made this drawing long ago."

"Yes, Your Imperial Highness," I said.

"You made it in Siberia," she said, almost in a whisper.

"Yes," I repeated.

She looked at the old drawings without another word, then put them aside, took my new drawings and again began to laugh.

The discussion of uniforms led to some remark about Emperor William.

"Oh, he was very silly—that William," the Grand Duchess observed.

"Why?" Baroness Meller asked.

"Because he was always knighting so many Jews," Anastasia said.

I gave a start. For the last ten years Emperor William had been accused of every conceivable crime, but nobody remembered or even seemed to know the fact that he had been in the habit of knighting Jews. I myself had forgotten all about it, and only now when the Grand Duchess spoke of it I remembered a conversation on that very subject I had many, many years ago with my father. On that occasion father told me that our Emperor wholly disapproved of Emperor William's policy of knighting so many Jews. In Russia too there were a few Jews among the Nobility, although they had to become Christians first. Emperor Nicholas was not an anti-Semite in the modern sense

of the term. He objected to the acceptance of Jews into the ranks of the Nobility, chiefly on social grounds.

How very odd it was to hear Anastasia bring up that matter, which had long since lost every importance.

"By the way," I asked the Grand Duchess, "how do you like Emperor William with his beard?"

"Emperor William with his beard?" she asked, puzzled. "William has no beard."

"He grew a beard after the war," I said. "Haven't you ever seen one of his photographs taken after the war?"

"No, I never have," Anastasia said. "I cannot imagine him with a beard. But his moustache? Surely it still sticks up in the air, as it used to."

"I don't think so," I answered. "His moustache seems to have gone down quite a bit."

Anastasia began to laugh, repeating that she could not imagine Emperor William with a beard and a moustache which did not stick up in the air. And I too laughed heartily, not, however, at Emperor William's new appearance, but at M. Gillard's assertions that Mrs. Tschaikovsky had acquired all her knowledge of Royalty only in recent years from books and newspapers. Yet she had never even seen a picture of Emperor William with a beard, while most people were beginning to forget that he had ever shaved his chin.

We discussed Emperor William further and Anastasia said that while she did not like William himself she had always been very fond of his eldest son, Crown Prince Frederick William.

Again I could not help noting in my mind that no

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impostor would ever have made such a statement. From the beginning of the war the unfortunate Crown Prince had become the target of all possible accusations and ridicule. All available historical material testified to the profound animosity which had existed between the Romanovs and the Hohenzollerns. But I knew from my father that before the war the Russian Sovereigns and their children had always made an exception of Crown Prince Frederick William, of whom they all were very fond. But since the war I had never read or heard the slightest reference to that fact, which few people had ever known and nobody seemed to remember.

From Royalty the conversation turned to Russian refugees. It surprised and touched me that Anastasia, after all her dreadful experiences both in Russia and among the Russians in Germany, still spoke of Russians in that tone of benevolent paternalism, so typical of her parents. She said that it hurt her deeply to see so many Russians live in misery. It was clear that in spite of everything they remained to Anastasia *her* people—her father's subjects whose well being was of real concern to her.

I asked the Grand Duchess in what country she herself would best like to live. She smiled like a child about to express a very impossible and in the opinion of the grown ups laughable wish and said

"In England."

"She is crazy about England," Baroness Meller said reproachfully. "We once even quarrelled because of England. She will not admit that England has ruined Russia."

"I love England," Anastasia said, emphatically.

That the Russian Sovereigns had always been very fond of England and the English was, of course, a well known fact. But since the revolution all Russian monarchists had become rabidly anti-British. They believed that England had deliberately assisted in the overthrow of the Russian monarchy and later refused its hospitality to the deposed Sovereigns, thereby sealing their doom. They further blamed England for the collapse of the White movement in Russia and the truly shameful surrender of Admiral Kolchak to the bolsheviks by the Allied representatives in Siberia. In short, there was no better way of provoking the wrath of Russian monarchists than by professing one's love for England. In consequence, I could not help reflecting once more, that never would an impostor, bent on winning a following among the Russian monarchists be so persistently and even pugnaciously pro-British, as Grand Duchess Anastasia was. In actual fact, of course, Anastasia was not trying to win any following, but simply remained her own self and could not be shaken in her convictions—implanted in her by her parents—by all the arguments of all the Russian monarchists in the world.

After a while Anastasia began to question me on America. All her questions were *extremely pointed* and typical of a person accustomed to viewing countries from the vantage point of the ruling classes. She wanted to know to what extent the United States was actually democratic, how its democratic régime affected the population, what the general political and religious aspect of the country was, whether the aver-

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age American citizen was content with his lot and loyal to his government. When Baroness Meller mentioned prohibition, Anastasia turned to me and asked

"Oh, then you have not tasted any wine for years?"

"Good wine I have not tasted indeed, until I reached Paris," I said. "As for alcohol, I am afraid I have consumed quite a lot of it in the United States."

Anastasia looked at me with astonishment. "They still sell alcohol in America?" she asked.

"Illegally, of course, but they do," I answered. "If you have enough money you can buy as much of it as you want."

"And Americans themselves—do they also drink?" she asked again.

"They certainly do," I said.

"How terrible!" Anastasia exclaimed. "I cannot understand it. How can people do things which are forbidden by law?"

I could not help smiling. Here again was an example to what extent the Grand Duchess had preserved the ideas of her childhood. At the Russian Court obedience to law had always been taken for granted, as if a law carried with it an automatic power of self enforcement. To be sure, there were revolutionaries, just as there were other criminals who disobeyed all laws. But the average citizen was neither a revolutionary nor a criminal. How then could he do things forbidden by law?

"The American attitude towards laws is somewhat different from what it was in Russia," I tried to explain. "Americans believe that their country is owned by the people,—that is, by themselves. Laws are not

decreed from above, but devised by the people themselves for their own protection and convenience. Moreover, with the Federal Congress and forty-eight State Legislatures constantly passing new laws—there are so many of them, including a lot of very silly ones—one cannot possibly observe them all. For instance, in Kansas it is forbidden by law to smoke cigarettes, although one may smoke cigars and pipes. Your Imperial Highness will agree with me that one does not have to be a criminal to disregard such a law.”

“How funny!” the Grand Duchess laughed. “Why should people have such silly laws, especially when they themselves make them?”

She seemed highly amused and until my departure from Seeon kept teasing me about American laws, asking every once in a while whether I was not breaking some of them at the moment and should not, therefore, be sent to jail.

I noticed with some astonishment a constantly increasing number of sparrows congregate on the window sill of Anastasia's room. They appeared not to mind us at all and from time to time some of them even ventured into the room itself. I asked the Grand Duchess about them.

“Oh, these sparrows are my trusted friends,” she smiled. “They know me well and are not afraid of me. They always assemble here shortly before dinner time, because I feed them.”

We began to talk of animals in general of which Anastasia, as I presently discovered, remained as fond as she had always been. Incidentally, it was only when addressing Anastasia herself that I spoke in German.

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With Baroness Meller I continued to talk in Russian, and much to my amusement Anastasià who pretended not to know any Russian, understood every word we said. Indeed, she did not even appear conscious of the fact that we were talking in two different languages. Better still, when having forgotten the German word for squirrel I turned for help to the Baroness, it was Anastasia herself who answered my question in Russian.

My heart leapt with joy. Not only did she have a perfect command of Russian, but she had preserved that unique accent which I had never heard outside of her own family.

Unfortunately, Baroness Meller began to shout enthusiastically that Anastasia had begun to speak Russian and the Grand Duchess's eyes at once filled with tears. She denied vehemently that she had uttered a single Russian word and even asked me to confirm the fact. I assured her that she had been speaking in German all the time, and she smiled at me gratefully.

What impostor in Anastasia's position—I thought again—would refuse to speak Russian which she so obviously knew to perfection, thus furnishing her enemies with their best weapon against her?

For the whole day clouds were gathering from all sides and finally it began to thunder. Baroness Meller wanted to close the window, but Anastasia begged her not to do so.

"I am not afraid of storms," she said. "I love them."

It proved a very severe storm. The ancient castle shook and rumbled as if again besieged by enemies. Blinding lightning and deafening thunder kept explod-

ing every few seconds, seemingly right over our heads. The Baroness sat, pale with fear, and every once in a while she renewed her requests to be allowed to close the window. I myself felt far from comfortable. But to Anastasia the storm seemed to possess some peculiar fascination. She ceased to talk and moved closer to the window.

What could a great painter do, had he seen her during that storm, I mused. The gold of her hair shimmered softly against the background of the dark, bluish clouds. Her finely carved features acquired an ephemeral quality in the weird glow of the almost uninterrupted lightning. And her blue eyes stared in the distance, with an expression wherein profound sadness blended strangely with a sort of solemn joy. What thoughts, what emotions did that magnificent display of nature's noble anger provoke in her? I wondered. What did she perceive in those heavy clouds? What messages did she hear in that thunder which scattered through the mountains in a thousand echoes?

One thing I could see clearly—the storm did give her some deep emotional relief. And something truly regal there was in the utter fearlessness, indeed pleasure, of that frail young woman—a child almost—in the face of that violent tempest which, no doubt, made even many a stout-hearted man feel none too well at ease.

It was only when the dinner gong began to ring that the Grand Duchess indicated that we could take leave of her. No trace of nervousness remained between us. We had not only fully recognised each other, but as it

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seemed to me, also understood each other. It was obvious that now Anastasia was actually glad that I had come; that, although we had not as yet discussed her future, she was aware of my determination to do for her everything I possibly could.

As for myself, I now knew not only that Grand Duchess Anastasia was alive, but also that in spite of the bad state of her health, in spite of her shattered nerves, she was by no means the pathetic invalid I had pictured from the many accounts about her. Not only was her conversation perfectly rational, not only could I find no signs of an impaired memory, but I felt convinced that she still possessed her keen mind, her brilliant wit and incomparable sense of humour. More than that, she had undeniably preserved also her indomitable courage and inexhaustible joy of life.

And I felt infinitely relieved that this was so. For she was still so young—only twenty-six years of age—and, restored to normal conditions of life, she could well hope to find not only peace but actual happiness. Indeed, who had a better right to happiness than she whose innocent martyrdom had hardly been surpassed—nor often equalled—in the long annals of human suffering?

III

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STRANGELY symbolic were the surroundings in which I met Grand Duchess Anastasia for the first time after her supposed death. Castle Secon was some thousand years old and had been in turn a fortress of robber barons, a monastery, and a ducal palace. It bore many traces of its varied history. It possessed one of those famous torture cages too small for the prisoner either to lie down, stand straight, or sit in a natural position. The walls of one of its corridors had hundreds of ancient tombstones built into them. The monks' workshop was still full of old coffins. Several skeletons of saints were kept in its two chapels, their grinning skulls gruesomely adorned with bead whiskers. There were salons decorated with all the splendour of the First Empire and other rooms which seemed to belong to a cheap German boarding-house.

That mixture of faded Imperial magnificence—grim relics of mediæval cruelty and modern drabness—seemed to represent graphically all the successive stages of Anastasia's strange and tragic life. But outside spring reigned in all its perfumed loveliness. The castle—a whitewashed stone structure built around a square courtyard—stood on a peninsula in the middle of a lake. Rolling hills covered with a thick forest, surrounded the lake. Pale bluish mountains rose on

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the horizon. The garden was overgrown with flowers and old lilac trees, whose fragrant blossoms reached the second story windows. One could see no human habitation—only an old church across the lake, whose bells rang softly at intervals.

I hoped that the peace and beauty of the countryside would prove as symbolic of Anastasia's future as the castle itself was of her past—that I might be able to lead her out of that castle to a new life of peace and happiness. Yet I was only too keenly aware of all the obstacles which I would have to overcome in order to achieve my aim.

I felt profoundly grateful to the Leuchtenbergs for having offered their hospitality to Grand Duchess Anastasia, at a time when she was threatened with complete disaster.

The Leuchtenbergs, by the way, were direct descendants of Eugene de Beauharnais, who had been given the title of the Duke of Leuchtenberg by his step father, Napoleon. Eugene's son, Maximilian, came to Russia and married the daughter of Emperor Nicholas I, thereby obtaining the status of a member of the Russian Imperial Family, with the new title of Prince Romanovsky, Duke of Leuchtenberg. But in spite of such recent foreign origin, the family of Duke George was typically Russian. Indeed, they could well have walked out of the pages of some old Russian novel. They seemed so strangely out of place in their German castle.

Duke George had a large number of children and grandchildren. In accordance with the Russian laws, they were all, with the only exception of one married daughter, full-fledged Dukes and Duchesses of Leuch-

tenberg, which at first made it rather difficult for me to distinguish them. As in every Russian household there were also a great many attendants, guests, and plain hangers-on.

Duke George himself bore a striking resemblance to Emperor Nicholas I. He was a tall and handsome man with large dark eyes, an aquiline nose, and a small, greying moustache. His manners, however, contrasted strangely with his regal appearance. He walked with a mincing step, talked very rapidly with a sort of feminine lisp, and altogether made the impression of a very kindly but fidgety and rather timid man.

His wife, Duchess Olga, was on the contrary a short woman with a stern face, the manners and speech of a top sergeant and, apparently, a great deal of energy.

Although, like all the other Russians, the Leuchtenbergs had not been able to save any of their possessions from Russia, their German castle was a veritable treasure house, whose library alone represented a fortune. In spite of it, they were in constant financial difficulties. Instead of having decided at the outset which of their many valuable belongings they wanted to sell, they kept selling them piece-meal—a volume or two one month, a Napoleonic relic another—and living on the proceeds of these sales; in other words, on their capital, and that capital was rapidly declining.

Even so, they lived on a rather large scale, owned three cars, and travelled. It seemed to me that where so much money was being spent daily, it would have been easy enough to supply Grand Duchess Anastasia at least with a few necessities. But the Leuchtenbergs bought nothing for her.

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"'The Little One' is very fond of good clothes, particularly lingerie," Baroness Meller once told me. "But she has only two dresses and very little lingerie—all of it quite old. She keeps them so neat and clean. She mends every little hole and repairs her dresses over and over again. And she does it all with one hand, because the bone of her left elbow had been amputated so that she cannot use her left hand. She never complains either, although she does say once in a while, that she would like so much to have a new pair of silk stockings. She is also crazy about perfume, but naturally cannot afford to buy any."

Duke George himself would, no doubt, have bought "the Little One" all the silk stockings and perfume she wanted, but Duchess Olga, although quite as impractical as her husband, was extremely close fisted and refused to buy anything even for her own children. Her daughter-in-law complained to me that her shoes were quite worn out but she could not get the money to buy new ones.

Duchess Olga was also rather rude occasionally and quarrelled a great deal with Anastasia. One of those quarrels took place a day or two after my arrival and I was not a little dismayed by the Duchess's own account of it.

my house she will be kidnapped, arrested, killed! Well, that made some impression on her. Her eyes filled with tears, but she would not give in and said: 'I don't care whether I die or not. I do not ask to be kept alive.'"

Although at the time I had not yet seen "the Little One" and, therefore, did not know whether she was actually Grand Duchess Anastasia, I could not refrain from pointing out to Duchess Olga that a sick and nervous person certainly should not be treated in such a manner. The old Duchess saw that I was quite angry and attempted to justify herself.

"She is my guest, I keep her here out of charity and she has to behave," she said. "But you mustn't think that I am not fond of her. You seem to be much impressed by my husband's kindness towards her. Well, that husband of mine is kind but he is not firm. You know, he entered a gentleman's agreement with the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt. They agreed that were any witness to identify 'the Little One' positively as that Polish woman, Francisca, my husband would surrender her to the Grand Duke's detective, Knopf.

"So Knopf came here with some prostitute from Berlin, and she gave one look at 'the Little One,' and shrieked: 'She is Francisca!' Whereupon Knopf demanded her surrender. You should have seen my kindly husband then! He got so scared that he came to me and said: 'Well, we have to deliver her to Knopf. What else can we do? I cannot break my word of honor.' Then I told him: 'I'll show you what else we can do!' And I called Knopf and the prostitute into the hall, threw open the entrance door, and said sharply

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to them: 'Get out! And if I see any of you anywhere near my castle, I'll have you arrested and thrown into jail.' You should have seen them run! So it remains a question to whom 'the Little One' owes more—to me or that kindly husband of mine."

From what I knew through other sources, the Duchess' story was substantially correct, but the fact was hardly consoling. It was good of the old Duchess to protect "the Little One," but I hardly dared to think how the proud and sensitive Anastasia had to suffer from her hostess' outbursts of temper. And it was extremely disturbing to know that Duke George himself could fall so easily into such obvious traps.

I suspected, however, that his wife was somewhat exaggerating his weakness; at least I could not imagine the Duke actually surrendering Anastasia to her enemies. It was also fortunate that Duke George, while criticised, ridiculed, and even threatened from many sides for harbouring Anastasia, had found two staunch supporters in the persons of Crown Prince Ruprecht of Bavaria and the German General Hoffmann. Neither of them had ever seen Anastasia, but the Crown Prince said that he was virtually certain of her identity, while General Hoffmann had given the word of honour of a German officer to Duke George, that he positively knew his protégée to be Grand Duchess Anastasia and could produce incontrovertible proof of the fact, but for certain reasons preferred not to do so except in an extremity.

General Hoffmann's opinion in the matter was—it must be explained—of paramount importance. During the World War he had served as Chief of Hindenburg's

Intelligence Service on the Russian front, and later as the head of the German delegation which had concluded the peace treaty of Brest-Litovsk with the Bolsheviks. At the time Germany showed great concern over the fate of the Russian Imperial Family and made several attempts to obtain their release. General Hoffmann was, therefore, probably the best informed man in the world on what had actually happened to the various members of Russian Royalty in the fatal summer of 1918.

My recognition of Grand Duchess Anastasia produced a strong effect on the Leuchtenbergs. Except for Duke George's eldest son, Dimitriy, who for some incomprehensible reason was almost hostile to Anastasia, they were all extremely pleased. Baron Meller-Zakomelsky, in particular, was simply touching in his joy as well as his confidence, that I could be counted upon to be of real help to Anastasia.

"I always knew that she is the Grand Duchess," he said to me. "I can assure you that a lot of people who do not admit it know it just as well. But they are such cowards. I myself would have raised hell long ago, but the trouble is that I am not considered a competent witness because I had seen the Grand Duchess before the revolution on very few occasions only. But you can do a lot for her. If nothing else, you can start such a noise about the whole matter as to make her enemies shake with fear."

"Such indeed is my intention," I admitted.

"May God be with you," the Baron said. "And if there is anything I could do to help you, you can always count on me."

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Although Duke George expressed his extreme satisfaction, he was unable to go into any further discussions of the course of action to be taken, because on the day of my first meeting with Anastasia he had to leave Secon for Paris. As for his wife, she told me at once that it was extremely important to find a new refuge for the Grand Duchess, for she would never be quite safe in Secon or indeed anywhere in Germany.

I was very glad to notice that in consequence of my recognition, the old Duchess had at once assumed a much more respectful attitude towards Anastasia. At the same time, however, not only she but all the members of her family apparently took it for granted, that from now on the chief responsibility for Anastasia's well-being rested on me.

Not that any of them made any definite statement to that effect, but while only a day previously they talked of "the Little One" as *their* protégée, in whose fate they were most eager to interest me, they now—perhaps unconsciously—changed their tone in very much the same way that a salesman does after a successful sale. Overnight "the Little One" became *my* Little One; and while they were only too glad to co-operate with me and, so to speak, keep her in storage for me, they quite obviously expected me to take her off their hands as soon as possible.

All this amused rather than disturbed me. I was more than willing to be regarded as chiefly responsible for Anastasia's future; indeed, would have so regarded myself under any circumstances. That the Leuchtenbergs viewed the situation in the same light could only be of decided help to me. The only—and very big—question

was whether I actually could achieve anything. To transport the Grand Duchess to a safer place and keep her there was primarily a question of money; and I had never had any except my very insufficient earnings which were now likely to dwindle further, with all the time and effort I would have to devote to Anastasia's affairs.

But it was one of those situations in which it is impossible to ask how strong the enemy is, but only where he is. I felt it my unquestionable duty not only to find a safe haven for the Grand Duchess, but to do everything in my power to obtain for her the formal acknowledgment of her identity and rights. The question was not whether it could be done, but how it could be done.

My first conversation with Grand Duchess Anastasia had taken place on a Tuesday and I planned to leave Secon for Berlin on Thursday of the same week. In the meantime I was eager to see as much of the Grand Duchess as possible. Fortunately, Anastasia had now dropped all her objections to my intervention in her case, so that on Wednesday it was she herself who asked Baroness Meller to bring me again to her room.

She looked much better than on the previous day and greeted me cheerfully. When I told her how eager I was to have a photograph of her, she brought all the photographs she had and giving them to me said:

"You may take those of which I have two prints."

After a while Anastasia observed that she had a certain wish and needed advice but did not quite know how to explain the matter. I smiled. Decidedly Anastasia had changed in nothing. Quite obviously she wanted

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me to do something for her, but in her own and her sisters' well-known way she would never say so directly. I hastened to offer my services.

"Last Christmas Tania gave me quite a costly present," she began, looking very much embarrassed, while I noted the fact that she still referred to my sister, Tatiana, as Tania. As no one in our family expected to occupy the throne, we had been lavish with nicknames, and my sister had had as many of them as the rest of us. But the Grand Duchesses had always called her "Tania."

"I could not refuse Tania's present," Anastasia continued, "but it embarrasses me so much to have it. I know Tania is terribly poor and her present must have cost money. I shall show it to you."

She went to her chest of drawers and returned with a little cardboard box. I opened it and found a small swastika—the favourite sign of the late Empress Alexandra—made of imitation gold and studded with imitation rubies. Quite a cheap trinket it was, although to my sister in her straitened circumstances it must have, no doubt, represented a considerable expense.

"I have worn it all the time," Anastasia said. "It has been actually mine, and I wonder whether you could make Tania take it back as a souvenir from me, without offending her."

I felt not a little moved. Once more, the incident was so typical of Anastasia as I had known her before the Revolution. She and her sisters had always been so touchingly considerate in such matters and afraid that people were giving them too costly presents.

Equally characteristic was Anastasia's assumption

that the little swastika had acquired a new value because it had been worn by her. On the part of a commoner such an assumption would, of course, have been utter conceit. But certainly Anastasia looked not a bit conceited—indeed, extremely embarrassed—while explaining the whole matter of the swastika to me. Before the Revolution it would have been mere pretense on her part to ignore the fact that any member of her entourage could be made happy by any present from a Grand Duchess—were it no more than a piece of string or a paper elip—and would preserve it for ever after as a sacred relic.

Moreover, the children of the Emperor had been—and I could see that Anastasia still was—quite impersonal about such matters. They knew the sentimental value of a Grand Duchess' gift, just as, let us say, a Bishop knows the value of his blessing. But a Bishop takes no personal pride in the magic powers ascribed to his rank. Likewise, the Grand Duchesses had taken no personal pride in the adoration shown to them as to the daughters of the Sovereign.

In the meantime Baroness Meller asked me whether I would be willing to take Anastasia out on the lake in a rowboat.

"She adores boating," the Baroness said. "Only, I must warn you that she expects everybody to handle the boat and the oars according to all the regulations of the old Navy of the Guard. She always makes fun of people who show no knowledge of those regulations, whatever they may have been."

That was a problem. To a person unfamiliar with boating it may seem that rowing is always rowing. But

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as a matter of fact there are many different ways of rowing. One can row with a long stroke or a short stroke, one can raise the oars by several inches or keep them always close to the water. One can sit in any number of positions, hold the hands close together or far apart, and so on.

I had not rowed for some fifteen years and my own marine manners had always resembled those of a Finnish fisherman rather than a sailor of the Emperor's Guard. Even so, I tried hard to remember how those sailors used to row. But whether I succeeded in my efforts or the Grand Duchess was simply too pleased to have been taken out on the lake—for pleased she certainly was—she found no fault with me and only kept asking whether I was not getting tired.

After our return home, Baroness Meller remained downstairs, while I escorted the Grand Duchess to the door of her room. I told her that I had to leave on the following day, perhaps early, and so wanted to take leave of her now. But she would not let me.

"No matter how early you will have to leave, come first to see me," she said.

We reached her door. There was so much I wanted to tell her now that we were at last alone. But I could find no words to express my feelings. I only kissed her hand and said:

"I am so happy to have seen you again."

She gave me a long, eager look. I had the sensation that she was reading in my eyes all I wanted to tell her but did not know how to say it. At last she parted her lips to say something, but instead suddenly began to

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sob In a moment, however, she regained control of herself.

"It was all so dreadful . . ." she whispered, as if apologising for her tears

Then she pressed my hand and hurried to her room.

The following morning I learned that I did not have to leave until quite late in the afternoon. I wanted to go at once to Anastasia's room, but Baroness Meller told me that she was probably still asleep, and the old Duchess asked me to come to her study for a last discussion of our plans.

I told the Duchess that in my opinion our first concern must be about Anastasia's personal safety. The police of Hessen-Darmstadt persisted in their efforts to force upon the Grand Duchess the passport of the insane Francisca, in order to arrest her as a lunatic and a fraud. Luckily, the final decision in the matter depended upon the police of Berlin. I planned, therefore, to go at once to Berlin and persuade the metropolitan police that the identification of Anastasia as that Polish peasant was an obvious frame-up.

The country where, in my conviction, Anastasia would be safer than anywhere else was the United States. But to arrange her trip to the United States was not an easy matter. First of all, it required a lot of money, which it would be at best difficult to raise. Then there was, once more, the problem of her passport. Anastasia did not have a regular passport, but only a temporary certificate of identity, and I doubted very much that any American Consul would agree to affix a visa to such a document.

In the meantime, it seemed to me, my original plan

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of giving the case the widest possible publicity had become doubly urgent, because, for the present, publicity remained the only means whereby we could hope to instil at least a little fear in Anastasia's enemies, and serve notice on them that she was not quite as friendless as they apparently assumed.

The Duchess of Leuchtenberg agreed with me enthusiastically.

"If you are going to state openly that 'the Little One' is Grand Duchess Anastasia," she said, "the effect of it will be tremendous. Remember, that as yet nobody, not even Mrs. Rathlef, has made such a definite statement in print. It would do a lot to offset the mischief done by those two men, Knopf and Gillard, and also make matters much easier for me and my husband. And Anastasia's enemies will have to leave her alone, if only for a while. For something bad to happen to 'the Little One' shortly after the publication of your articles would be too obvious. And meanwhile we must find a safer place for her.

"As for that matter of passports," the Duchess went on, "do you know that the Governor of this province has offered to give 'the Little One' a League of Nations' passport, provided some person acceptable to him would certify that she is a Russian? Such a passport would be of immense advantage to her, because it could not be revoked by any police official as her present certificate can, and it would enable her to go to any country she pleases, and make it impossible for Hessen-Darmstadt or anybody else, to force any false identity on her. Well, we asked your cousin, Sergius Botkin, who is officially in charge of the interests of

Russian refugees in Germany, to issue the necessary certificate, but he refused. Yet he is convinced that 'the Little One' is Anastasia."

"He seems to be," I agreed. "When I saw him in Paris, he told me that Mrs. Tschaikovsky is either Anastasia or a miracle, and he does not believe in miracles. Nevertheless, being a diplomat of the old school, he would not definitely state even to me that Mrs. Tschaikovsky is Anastasia."

"That's just it," the Duchess said. "You must forgive me, but that cousin of yours is as much a coward as everybody else. Nobody asks him to state that 'the Little One' is Anastasia—only that she is a Russian. But he won't do even that!"

"And you yourself?" I asked. "Wouldn't the Governor accept your assurance in regard to Anastasia's nationality?"

The old Duchess shrugged her shoulders and said something rather vague, from which I gathered that while blaming my cousin Sergius, she herself was just as unwilling to vouch for Anastasia's nationality. I asked whether the Governor would accept a statement from me, but she said that he would not because he did not know me personally. Besides, I was a resident of a foreign country, so that the German authorities would have no means of getting hold of me, in case my testimony were later found to have been false.

A bitter irony, it seemed, that the daughter of the Russian Emperor could not even obtain a certificate to the effect that she is a Russian. To be sure, I ought not to have felt either as bewildered or indignant as I did. Had I not seen the Revolution, when the major-

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ity of courtiers and other high officials thought of nothing but how to save their own skins and ran from the Imperial palace like rats from a sinking ship? Had I not lived through those dreadful months of Siberian exile, hoping vainly that of all the millions of people who but so recently had sworn eternal loyalty to the Sovereigns, at least a handful might attempt to come to their rescue? True, after my escape abroad, I had met a great many people who claimed to have participated in all sorts of secret plots to liberate the Imperial Family, but they must have been very secret plots indeed, for in Siberia we had seen no evidence of them.

In later years, however, a change of heart seemed to have occurred, at least among those Russians who had managed to escape to foreign lands. But whether they now claimed to have always remained faithful to their Emperor, or admitted their treason and rued it bitterly, so many of them had again become monarchists that by 1927 it was difficult to find a Russian refugee of any other political convictions. Indeed, so rabidly monarchistic had some of them become, that even I who had escaped death with the Imperial Family only through a pure accident, found myself criticised at times for seditious ideas.

Now fate had presented them with an opportunity of displaying their loyalty in practise, by rallying to the support of Grand Duchess Anastasia. Yet, strangely enough, I found myself once again—as in Siberia—in the familiar company of my own sister and a faithful Russian doctor. As for the monarchists . . . ?

The old Duchess of Leuchtenberg at least did not pretend to be a monarchist.

"Take the letter 'm' off monarchism and you will know what my convictions are," she often said with more wit than orthographic exactness.

Nor was anything to be achieved through useless reproaches. It was lucky enough that the Duchess wholeheartedly approved of my planned course of action and was willing to harbour Anastasia, until such time as I found another place for her.

I gave the Duchess some money for Anastasia's personal expenses, which mollified the old lady further, and permitted me to bring once more to her attention my conviction, that a person of Anastasia's sensitivity and delicate state of health had to be treated with gentleness and tact, and spared the violent scenes the old Duchess was wont to stage. She seemed not at all annoyed by my admonition, and assured me that I did not have to worry on Anastasia's behalf.

After luncheon Baroness Meller and I went to see the Grand Duchess. She met us at the door of her room and expressed the wish to go for a walk.

"Why didn't you come earlier?" she asked me somewhat reproachfully. "I got up at eight o'clock, so as not to miss you, and was waiting for you the whole morning."

I explained to her regretfully that I had been told that it was better not to disturb her in the morning, and, besides, the Duchess of Leuchtenberg had wanted to have a final discussion with me.

We left the grounds of the castle and went out on the road. For a while Baroness Meller fell behind,

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and I took advantage of those few minutes to assure Anastasia that she should try not to worry about all the plots against her and that everything would come out well in the end.

She smiled gratefully, but shook her head and said sadly: "Oh, no. Nothing will ever come of it. Nothing will be well again."

"Oh, yes, it will," I insisted. "But, in any case, you must not think of all those machinations against you, if only for the reason that there is nothing you can do about them. It is for us to worry about your affairs. As for yourself, you should try to concentrate on pleasant things only and take good care of your health."

"My health?" she repeated with a pathetic smile. "How can I take care of my health, and who needs it?"

"Would you like to go to America?" I asked.

She seemed quite astonished. "I have never thought of America," she answered. "Yes, I think I would like to go to America, if only because it is so far away, and nobody there would care about me. But it is not possible. I have no money, no passport. How could I go to America?"

"I do not know myself, just now," I said. "Personally though, I would be most eager to have you come to America, for the reason that you would be quite safe there. Do you want me to try to arrange it?"

She smiled again—quite cheerfully this time. "I do not think it can be arranged, but I do want you to try," she said.

We had now left the main road and come upon a spot which made me feel suddenly transferred to Finland. I was just about to say so, but caught myself in

time. The Imperial Family has spent a part of every summer in the Finnish fjords, and I feared that a reference to Finland might be painful to the Grand Duchess. But in a moment Anastasia herself asked:

"Doesn't this place remind you of Finland?"

I gave a start. "Indeed, it does," I said. "I was just thinking of it myself. Did you like Finland?"

"Oh, yes, I did," she sighed. "I liked it so very much."

She wanted to say something else, but hesitated. I knew so well the expression her face assumed. No doubt, she wanted again to ask me to do something for her and, as usual, was searching for some sufficiently round-about way of making her request. My guess proved right.

"I am always asking people to do things for me," she said. "It is so embarrassing. I should like to ask Sergius Dimitrievich Botkin for a favour, but I don't know how to ask him."

"If Your Imperial Highness would only tell me what it is," I said, "I shall see to it that he does it."

"Oh, no," she protested. "No, I ought not to bother people so much. I am such a burden to everybody."

Baroness Meller who by that time had rejoined us became very curious, and began to insist that Anastasia tell us what she wanted my cousin, Sergius, to do for her. But as I presently discovered, Anastasia still remained the stubborn child she had always been. Any attempt to force her to do something, only made her the more determined not to do it. She said rather sharply that she was not going to tell us anything and regretted having mentioned the matter at all. Where-

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upon she froze into a displeased silence I decided to use the same method I would have used under the circumstances fifteen years previously

"I know what it is," I said "Your Imperial Highness wants me to tell my cousin that his nose is quite out of shape and that in general he looks like a clown "

The Grand Duchess looked at me with consternation, but in a moment burst into laughter

"Oh, no! Oh, no!" she protested "I never wanted to say anything of the sort! Besides, his nose is quite all right and he has always been very nice to me "

"I don't think you are sincere," I said "I know, you think that he is a clown "

"No, not at all," Anastasia protested again "I owe him a great deal And I still feel quite guilty towards him One day he brought me a beautiful bouquet of flowers, but as soon as he left, my cat jumped on the table and destroyed the whole bouquet On the following day, your cousin came again and asked 'Where are my flowers?' It was so embarrassing I had to tell him that there was nothing left of his flowers "

"Didn't I tell you that he is a clown?" I laughed "He should feel guilty—not you What he ought to have done was to go out immediately and buy another bouquet I shall tell him that you consider him very ill mannered and altogether ridiculous "

"Oh, please don't," she began to plead, apparently far from certain that I was not likely to do as I threatened

"I will, because I am convinced that this is what you want me to tell him," I continued to tease her

"Not at all!" she exclaimed again "All I wanted you to tell him is, that he promised to send me some

newspaper articles concerning my case, but has never sent them."

"I shall be happy to remind him of that," I laughed.

"And you promise not to say anything silly to him?" Anastasia asked.

"Yes, now that I know what your real message is, I promise," I assured her.

For the rest of our walk the Grand Duchess remained in a very cheerful mood, and we continued to joke and talk nonsense, until we reached the castle. But when I began to take leave of her, for it was time for me to go, she again became sad and asked me not to forget her and keep in touch with her.

When I was entering the car, one of the Leuchtenbergs said to me:

"Look, 'the Little One' came to her window to see you leave. This is quite astonishing. Do you know that you are the first of our guests to be so honoured?"

I looked at the window and indeed saw Anastasia smiling and waving to me. How often had I seen her thus, at the window, in the days of our Siberian exile! I became so engrossed in the contemplation of that picture, fraught with so many disturbing memories, that I completely forgot the Leuchtenbergs who had gathered round my car.

"Oh, those American manners of his!" I heard the young Duchess Tamara exclaim. "He doesn't even say good-bye!"

But the meaning of her words reached my mind only after the car had swerved around the corner and Castle Seon disappeared from my sight.

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THE news of my meeting with Grand Duchess Anastasia had spread rapidly, so that upon my arrival in Berlin I was at once besieged by many people interested in her case. Among them was Mrs. von Rathlef-Keilmann, who had unwittingly caused the wrath of the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt against Anastasia. But it was also Mrs. von Rathlef, who had done more than anybody else to prove Anastasia's claim, and had spent all her money gathering evidence. Of her devotion to Anastasia there could be no question.

Together with Mrs. von Rathlef's lawyer, Dr. Voeller, I proceeded at once to collect evidence to prove that the identification of Anastasia with the demented Polish peasant, Francisca Schanzkovska, was a frame-up. It happened to be a task much easier than I had expected.

To begin with, according to official records, Francisca had disappeared from Berlin in March 1920, while Grand Duchess Anastasia had been rescued from the Landwehr canal in Berlin in February 1920. Furthermore, before her disappearance Francisca had been adjudged incurably insane, while according to all the doctors and alienists who had treated or examined her, Anastasia was not and never had been insane. The only languages Francisca had known were German and

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a Polish dialect of the lower classes, while Anastasia knew German, Russian and English, and not a word of Polish. Francisca had never had a child, while Anastasia had given birth to a son in 1919. Finally, Francisca's handwriting was entirely different from Anastasia's, and her photographs showed not the slightest resemblance to the Grand Duchess.

The story that Anastasia was Francisca was concocted by the Messrs. Knopf and Gillard, and based largely on the testimony of that prostitute whom Detective Knopf had brought to Castle Secon. That story not only bore every mark of fiction, but contained a number of contradictory statements.

Dr. Vocller and I decided that the surest way to prove definitely the fraudulent nature of the whole affair was to question the prostitute herself. We called at her apartment, located in the worst slums of Berlin, under the pretext of being journalists interested in her participation in Anastasia's case. She invited us for the first time to a café which, according to the police, was a notorious rendezvous of the Berlin underworld. But the woman herself was surprisingly good-looking and well dressed.

Later we invited her to several dinners in more respectable restaurants. At our final interview with her, we were joined by one of the Inspectors of the Berlin police, also posing as a journalist.

As we had hoped, she gave herself away completely. She could not even answer questions pertaining to what she claimed to have been her own experiences, without consulting a notebook. The Police Inspector adroitly manœuvred her into letting him see that notebook, and

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in it we discovered notes dictated by the same Detective Knopf. We caught her in any number of inconsistencies and some completely absurd statements. Thus, she asserted among other things that she knew Anastasia to be Francisca because Francisca's teeth had all been black and decayed. While many of Anastasia's teeth had had to be extracted, she did not have and never did have a single black tooth in her mouth.¹

Finally, we induced our charming guest to show us her contract with the newspaper, which had published the Francisca story, and whose editor, by the way, had been paid 25,000 marks by the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt for doing so.² Although we had supposed that her contract was likely to be somewhat irregular, we were nevertheless quite astonished to discover that she had been paid fifteen hundred marks to recognise Anastasia as Francisca, before she had even seen the Grand Duchess.

¹ The questioning of the woman by Dr Voeller, the officer of the Berlin Criminal Police, and myself was recorded in two protocols of May 19th and May 21st, 1927. Her mother and sister were questioned later with similar results, as shown by the protocol of May 24th, 1927. The complete impossibility of Mrs Tchaikovsky's identity with Francisca Schanzkovsky is, also, made clear by the written statement in lieu of a sworn affidavit made by Francisca's brother, Felix Schanzkovsky, on May 9th, of the same year.

² The admission made at least on two different occasions by Dr Lucke that the sum of 20,000 or 25,000 Marks was paid by the Grand Duke of Hessen Darmstadt to the *Scherl Verlag*, of which he was an editor, is recorded in the written statement of October 4th, 1927, addressed to the editor of *Die Tagliche Rundschau* by Fritz Spengruber, a solicitor, of No 33, 11 Neuhauserstrasse, Munich. Of the people, who had heard Dr Lucke make that admission, the Duke and Duchess of Leuchtenberg and Miss Agnes Wasserschieben repeatedly had expressed their willingness to confirm their testimony on the subject under oath. I, personally, first learned of the matter from the Duke of Leuchtenberg in May, 1927. According to his statement to me, it was Dr Lucke himself, who had accepted the money, and the amount was not 20,000 but 25,000 Marks. The Duke's statement is contained in my written notes of the time.

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The Police Inspector almost laughed himself to tears at the stupidity with which the prostitute was falling into every trap set for her. By the end of the dinner he called us aside and congratulated us on our skill as detectives.

"There can be no question that the whole business about Francisca is a frame-up," he said. "And you may rest assured that Mrs. Tschaikovsky will not be given Francisca's passport. Moreover, should you be willing to make a complaint, I shall have the prostitute arrested for perjury and entering a fraudulent agreement. You have gathered enough material to make a jail sentence for the woman certain."*

While I felt inclined to feel sorry for the woman, who, after all, was but a stupid creature not likely to refuse fifteen hundred marks for any service, I wanted nevertheless to make the necessary complaint against her. But the Duke of Leuchtenberg, Mrs. von Rathlef, and several others begged me not to do so. They insisted that to have that prostitute put in jail for a few months would achieve nothing, except to forewarn our chief enemy, the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt. It was the Grand Duke whom they wanted to bring to court, and they were eager not to arouse his suspicions in the meantime.

I let myself be persuaded and never ceased to regret it. No action has ever been taken against the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt, and the Francisca myth continues to be believed by many to this day. Had the

* A photograph of the woman's fraudulent contract with the *Scherl Verlag* is reproduced opposite page 177 of the English edition of Mrs. von Rathlef Keilmann's book *Anastasia*, published in this country in 1929 by Payson & Clarke, Ltd

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star witness in the case been given a jail sentence for perjury, the case would have been killed once and for all.

It was also while investigating the Francisca affair, that I became definitely convinced of the fact that M Gillard in his persecution of his own formerly so much adored pupil, was not acting in good faith

Nothing is easier than to expose an impostor. I myself had exposed several of them, and it had never taken me longer than ten or fifteen minutes to do so. The plain fact is that to impersonate somebody one has never known, in a manner convincing to people who have known that person, is a sheer impossibility. Indeed, professional actors have enough trouble trying to appear convincing in historical rôles to audiences eager to be convinced. I have yet to see a Hollywood star who has mastered even the simple art of offering her hand for a kiss, in the manner in which ladies of the aristocracy used to do it

It is for this reason that no impostor has ever enjoyed the slightest success, except among people who had not known the person he claimed to be. Confronted with a competent witness, the cleverest impostor cannot help giving himself away, in even the shortest and most casual conversation. The very assumption that a demented Polish peasant could be mistaken by anybody for a Royal Princess was altogether preposterous. But, above all, had Anastasia actually been a Polish peasant, M Gillard would have to do no more, in order to disprove her claim, than to give an accurate report of her personality, manners, and conversation. Certainly he would not have been in need of any deliberate

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misstatements of facts, misquotations and misrepresentations. Yet his writings about Anastasia were full of them.

For instance, some time during the year 1925, Grand Duchess Anastasia told the Danish Ambassador, M. Zahle, that her mother, the Empress, had a small swastika on the hood of her car. M. Zahle tried to verify that statement, but nobody, not even the Empress' personal valet, remembered anything about a swastika on Her Majesty's car. Many months later, in a new book about the Russian Imperial Family, M. Zahle found a photograph of the Empress' car. He looked at the hood, but saw nothing on it. He then examined the photograph with a powerful magnifying glass and discovered the swastika on the exact spot mentioned by Anastasia. Characteristically enough, when he reported his discovery to Anastasia, she remained quite unimpressed; indeed, she seemed to have forgotten that she had ever told M. Zahle about the swastika on her mother's car.

Mrs. von Rathlef had described that incident in one of her articles, and Gillard answered by publishing a photograph of the Empress' car with a huge swastika drawn on its door. In the accompanying article he enquired sneeringly how anybody could have failed to notice that swastika on the picture. In the first place, Anastasia had mentioned the swastika before anybody had been able to find a photograph of the Empress' car. In the second place, the swastika—as Anastasia had correctly stated—had actually been, not on the door, but on the hood of the car. In the third place, the swastika on M. Gillard's picture had been quite obvi-

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ously drawn in with black ink, doubtless on Gillard's own orders.⁴

The photograph of Francisca, published in one of Gillard's articles, also showed plainly traces of retouching, made in an effort to create some resemblance between Francisca and the recent photographs of Grand Duchess Anastasia. In spite of it, the faces were so utterly different, that Gillard himself could think of nothing better than to print over the photographs of Francisca and Anastasia the caption: "The Gradual Transformation of Francisca Schanzkovska's Face."⁴

It was, indeed, quite a transformation!

In another article, Gillard declared that my sister had acknowledged Mrs. Tschaikovsky as Anastasia, because she had been hypnotised by Mrs. von Rathlef. Aside from the fact that Mrs. von Rathlef had never been known to possess any talent as a hypnotist, M. Gillard knew quite well that my sister had never even met Mrs. von Rathlef and was, moreover, openly hostile to her. Like Anastasia, my sister attributed all the intrigues against the Grand Duchess to the publicity given her case by Mrs. von Rathlef, and accused the latter—quite unfairly,—of having published her articles about Anastasia for the sole purpose of making money.

I further learned that it was Mme. Gillard, who in 1925 had identified a malformation of Anastasia's right

⁴ Among the obviously retouched parts of Francisca's photograph are the ears, to which small eardrops have been added, undoubtedly for the reason that Grand Duchess Anastasia's ears are pierced. According to the testimony of a number of Francisca's close friends, she had never worn eardrops and her ears had not been pierced. One of the documents, recording the above fact, is the protocol of the questioning of Mrs. Wingender and Mrs. Wypyrzock of May 24th, 1927.

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foot and a scar on one of her fingers, and Gillard himself who had stated that Anastasia's present handwriting resembled closely her handwriting at the age of fourteen. Still further, that in the presence of Ambassador Zahle, Professor Rudnev, and Mrs. von Rathlef, Gillard had repeatedly referred to Anastasia as Her Imperial Highness, and stated with tears in his eyes that he would do everything in his power to help her. Yet in 1926 I had received a cable from Gillard, wherein he declared that all rumours to the effect that he had ever admitted the possibility that Mrs. Tschai-kovsky was Grand Duchess Anastasia, were Bolshevik propaganda. Was His Excellency the Danish Ambassador by any chance in charge of Bolshevik propaganda?

But to quote all the instances in which M. Gillard had stated deliberate untruths, or availed himself of retouched photographs and other faked or planted evidence, would require the writing of a whole book. And in my opinion, his conduct—a conduct which dismayed me utterly, for I had previously held the highest opinion of M. Gillard—showed conclusively, not only that he had set out to prove something he himself did not believe, but also that he regarded as most probable, and most likely knew definitely, that the so-called Mrs. Tschaikovsky was actually Grand Duchess Anastasia.

Had he been honest in his conviction that Anastasia was an impostor, he would never have based his case against her on deliberate falsehoods. Who, indeed, unless completely insane, would attempt to prove a truth with incessant and systematic lying? Furthermore, had he honestly doubted Anastasia's identity, he

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would either have limited himself to proving that she was not Anastasia, or else made a serious effort to discover who she actually was.

That she was not Francisca, Gillard knew better than any man, since he himself had participated in the manufacture of the false evidence that she was. The weakness of the whole case was self-evident. Had it not taken only about one hour for Dr. Voeller and myself to persuade the police of Berlin that Anastasia was not Francisca; to persuade them so thoroughly, moreover, that, on the basis of *our data* and arguments, they had rejected as false the identification of Anastasia as Francisca by the police of Hessen-Darmstadt, although the latter had prepared a voluminous report on the subject?

And how had that Francisca got mixed up in Anastasia's case at all? She was a discovery of Detective Knopf, whom the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt had hired to prove at all cost that Anastasia was not Anastasia, but somebody else. Francisca happened to be the only young woman—albeit by several years Anastasia's senior—in the files of the Missing Persons' Bureau of Berlin, who had disappeared in 1920—the year Anastasia had appeared in Berlin. Besides, having been adjudged incurably insane, if found, she could be arrested and placed for life in an insane asylum. Hence the efforts to prove, take what it may, that Anastasia was Francisca, and the consequent necessity of fabricating spurious evidence in the complete absence of actual facts.

Some of those efforts, however, in spite of their sordidness, bordered on the comical. For instance, Detective Knopf had attempted to persuade the relatives of

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Francisca, that she had had a child or a miscarriage. But those relatives who until then, had appeared willing, for a price, to testify to almost anything, emphatically refused to defame the missing Francisca's character. M. Gillard then promptly declared that Anastasia had invented the story of having given birth to a son, and that the doctors must always have known it, for why otherwise had she been registered in the Dalldorf asylum as Miss Unknown instead of Mrs. Unknown!

My first impulse was to go at once to Switzerland and have a personal talk with M. Gillard. I hoped that I could, perhaps, bring him to his senses, and awaken in him his former loyalty to the Imperial Family. But I was assured that such a move would not only be useless, but dangerous.

"Gillard has become unrecognisable," a friend of mine told me. "He knows only too well what he is doing and is a complete nervous wreck. But he has gone too far to back out. And no matter what you tell him, and in the presence of how many witnesses, he will immediately write another of his articles, misquoting your every word. Far better not to have anything to do with him."

And Gillard's motive? That was, perhaps, the worst of it. His own letters to Mrs. von Rathlef, written before his betrayal of Anastasia, revealed the fact that he was at the time in serious financial straits, and both he and his wife had grown well-nigh desperate. And apparently he is the type of person to whom years of grinding poverty were more demoralising than even, the threat of immediate death. Perhaps it were but

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natural. Many a Russian, who had conducted himself heroically in the days of the Civil War, had after years of misery abroad, sold himself for a mere pittance to the very Bolsheviks against whom he had fought.

Gillard had not sold himself to the Bolsheviks, to be sure. He had only become "the representative" of the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt, as he now styled himself. And great as was my contempt for him, I yet could not help pitying him. True, for the present he seemed free from financial worries, but how could that temporary security make up for the loss of his mental peace and self-respect? And how long would that security last? Could the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt himself have the slightest respect for him? People, who hire themselves out to perform what in plain language is known as a dirty job, are usually despised by their own employers, as much as by the rest of the world, and dismissed by them at the earliest opportunity.

It was truly for a mess of pottage that poor Gillard had sold his reputation as a loyal and honest man, and the respect and affection of so many of his former friends.

As for myself, having received the assurance of the Berlin police that Grand Duchess Anastasia would not be given the passport of Francisca Schanzkovska, I turned to the study of all available evidence concerning Anastasia's true identity. Most of it was to be found either in the files of my cousin's chancery or in the possession of Mrs. von Rathlef. My cousin himself was at the time in Paris, but his assistant, Baron von der Osten-Sacken-Tettenborn, allowed me free access to his

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files and helped me further by explaining matters, of which for one reason or another there did not exist any written record.

Much as I had read about Anastasia's case in the course of the preceding year and a half, I was nevertheless amazed at the wealth of material and the incontrovertible nature of much of the evidence in her favor. But I realised at the same time, that in my struggle for Anastasia's recognition I would be hampered, as much by the timidity of her supporters as by the unscrupulousness and ruthlessness of her opponents.

Probably not less than a half of all the material in my cousin's files was marked as strictly confidential and would not—so Osten-Sacken hastened to explain to me—be released under any circumstances, for use either in the press or even in the courts. It was the same with oral statements—half of them could not be used, and would be denied by the people who had made them, if quoted.

Of all those people it was the Danish Ambassador, M. Zahle, whom it was the easiest to excuse. After all, he was a foreigner, a diplomat in active service, making an excellent career. Besides, he had done a great deal for Anastasia before his Government, scared by the ever widening controversy, had ordered him to cease his efforts in her behalf.

Of what the Russians, including my cousin, were so afraid, was more difficult to understand. They certainly had no careers to lose. Yet my cousin himself had told me, while I was still in Paris, that he feared most of all to do or say something that could conceivably give offense to Grand Duchess Olga or the Grand

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Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt. But to espouse Anastasia's cause and at the same time fear to displease Olga or Hessen-Darmstadt was like starting a war with the determination not to wound a single enemy.

Until my arrival in Seeon, the behaviour of Grand Duchess Olga appeared particularly baffling to me. It was the Duchess of Leuchtenberg who gave me the first plausible explanation by telling me the story of the fortune in the Bank of England. At first I refused to believe it, because I could not imagine a sister of the Emperor disowning her own niece for so sordid a motive and because the Emperor himself had told my father in Siberia that he had no money left in England.

"The Emperor, no doubt, knew his family better than we did," the Duchess of Leuchtenberg had commented on that latter consideration of mine. "But the fact remains that Anastasia's statement about the money in the Bank of England was verified by Zahle through the Bank itself and found to be true. And the further fact is that it was only from Anastasia herself that her aunts learned about the existence of that money."

On that subject I found a great deal of material in my cousin's archives, all of which seemed to indicate that the Duchess of Leuchtenberg was right in her explanation of Olga's attitude towards Anastasia. But it was this material—which also strongly inculpated Olga's eldest sister, Grand Duchess Xenia—that my cousin was particularly determined to keep secret.

That Olga had fully recognised Anastasia I could no longer doubt. True, her only written statement to the Danish Ambassador said merely that she by no means denied Anastasia's identity, but was not yet pre-

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pared to acknowledge her formally. But she had spoken of Anastasia, above all treated Anastasia herself, in a manner which made it clear that she was convinced of her true identity.

Here are a few of the notes Grand Duchess Olga sent to Grand Duchess Anastasia, after their last meeting in Berlin in the fall of 1925.*

Undated

"I am sending you my love, am thinking of you all the time—it is so sad to go away knowing that you are ill and suffering and lonely. Don't be anxious. You are not alone now and we shall not abandon you. Kind regards to Mrs Ratcliffe* Do eat a lot and drink cream."

18th (31st) October 1925

"My thoughts are with you—I am remembering the times when we were together, when you stuffed me with chocolates, tea and cocoa. How is your health? You must be a good girl—must eat a lot and do as Mrs Ratcliffe* says. Kind regards to Professor Rudnev. My children were so glad to see us back—I hear that the youngest was crying every evening because he had to go to bed without his daddy and mammy. He kept on kissing and hugging me today. I hope you will soon be quite well. Am waiting for your letter. Olga."

22nd October (4th Nov) 1925

"I am sending to my little patient my own silk shawl which is very warm. I hope that you will wrap this shawl around your shoulders and your arms and that it will keep you warm during the cold of the winter. I bought this shawl in Japan before the War. Have you received the postcard? I am waiting for your news. Thinking of you all the time."

* Grand Duchess Olga's written messages to Grand Duchess Anastasia have been translated into English by me from the originals. Photostatic copies of those originals are in the possession of Grand Duchess Anastasia's American attorney.

* Mrs. Von Rathlef Keilmann.

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Am sending my kindest regards to the three inhabitants of No. 18. How is the white 'Kiki'? ** Kindest regards to Professor Rudnev. Love from Olga."

8th (21st) November 1925.

"It is a long time since we heard from Mrs. Ratcliffe,* I heard from Mr. Zahle that the poor hand is getting better. Thanks for your greetings. My boys have lessons every morning, but before their lessons we go for a walk, run about in the wood and look for frozen pools, etc. Now it is warm again. I was busy with a Russian Bazaar which was very successful. Yesterday evening I went to a Concert in the Danish Church which was arranged for the benefit of our Church. I had only one letter from Mrs. Gilliard since their arrival. They are probably busy with their own affairs. Kindest regards to both of you as well as to 'Kiki'.** Olga."

12th (25th) December 1925.

"Very many thanks for the book. Am longing to see you. It was so kind of you to think of my boys—they enjoyed the story very much indeed. I was so glad to hear that your health permits you to go to Church. I had already packed one of my 'sweaters' for you which I wore myself and like very much, but cannot make use of it now, as I am in mourning for my aunt. So I hope you will not mind wearing it—please do—you have to pull the thing over your head and then slip in your arms. We shall still keep our Russian Christmas. In the meantime everybody around is celebrating the Danish Christmas. Best wishes. Kindest regards to Mrs. Ratcliffe.* How is 'Kiki'? ** Olga."

Was it to a demented Polish peasant that Grand Duchess Olga had been sending her love? Was it an impostor over whose health she had so touchingly worried, whom she had lovingly admonished to be a good

* Mrs. Von Rathlef-Keilmann.

** Grand Duchess Anastasia's cat.

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girl? Was it a fraud whom the sister of the Emperor had longed to see, whom she had promised never to abandon?

Nor had anything happened in the interval between these letters and Olga's announcement that Anastasia was an impostor, that could conceivably have changed Olga's opinion concerning her niece's identity. What did happen, however, was that Anastasia had not died within a month—as her doctor had told Olga that she probably would—but instead recovered sufficiently to have been pronounced out of immediate danger.

Another thing which did happen was a cable from Grand Duchess Xenia to Grand Duchess Olga, a certified copy of which I have seen with my own eyes, and whose text so far as I remember it was:

"Do not acknowledge Anastasia under any circumstances."

And Grand Duchess Xenia it was who had established herself through the British courts, as heir to any properties or moneys of the late Russian Emperor which "may be found in England."

Moreover, apart from stating that Anastasia was an impostor, neither Xenia nor Olga had anything to say on the subject of her identity. They merely said that they had complete faith in M. Gillard, and pretended to believe all the fantastic and slanderous stuff he was writing, stuff which could not have convinced even a child at all familiar with the situation.

What then was the nature of the evidence in favour of Grand Duchess Anastasia's claim to her own identity, and which her German uncle, her Russian aunts,

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and their common representative, M. Gillard, attempted to ignore? Luckily, this evidence could not be concealed, because it had been gathered from many different sources and therefore was known in whole or in part to too many people. Much of it had also already been published by Mrs. von Rathlef.

Personally, I had long known that Grand Duchess Anastasia had not died instantly at the time of the shooting. Several Bolsheviks who had either participated in or witnessed the murder of the Imperial Family had been caught by the Whites; and two of them, Yakimov and Gorshkov, had testified that after the shooting Grand Duchess Anastasia began to shriek and tried to rise to her feet. One of the soldiers had then knocked her down with the butt of his rifle.*

There was also testimony to the effect that either the same or another soldier had pierced Anastasia's foot with his bayonet, pinning her down to the floor. My uncle, Colonel Victor Botkin, had told me in the spring of 1919 that the piece of the floor where the bayonet had entered had been cut out by the examining officials and preserved with the rest of the relics.

Knowing, however, that the bodies of the victims had been later cremated in the forest, we assumed that unless Anastasia had been killed by that blow of the rifle butt she must have been burned alive.

* The statements of Yakimov and Gorshkov are contained in the earlier editions of a summary of Sokolov's investigations published in France *Enquête Judiciaire Sur L'Assassinat De La Famille Impériale Russe*, Payot, Paris. Significantly enough those statements were omitted from later editions which appeared after the question of Grand Duchess Anastasia's identity became a subject of open controversy. Later, Sokolov had given all his original documents to Mr. Henry Ford, but according to a letter from Mr. Ford's secretary to Grand Duchess Anastasia's attorney those documents have subsequently been misplaced!

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I had also known that each of the Grand Duchesses had worn an icon under her dress, and that the icons belonging to Olga, Tatiana, and Marie were found near the pyre where their bodies had been cremated, while Anastasia's icon had disappeared. But, as so many other objects had also disappeared, I had not attached any significance to this fact.

Concerning the escape of one or another of the Grand Duchesses, there had always been many rumours, but I had never paid any attention to them, so certain had I been that they all had perished. Now, however, I was astonished to discover how weighty and precise was the evidence regarding Anastasia's rescue.

For instance, a German customs official, who had lived as a war prisoner in Siberia, testified that he had made the acquaintance of a Russian Red soldier, Sergei Komarov. The latter told him that he had served in the detachment which guarded the Imperial Family in Ekaterinburg, and that although he had not participated in the murder of the Imperial Family, he had assisted in taking the bodies out of the cellar. According to Komarov, the body of one of the Emperor's daughters had vanished without trace. Komarov's own guess was that, perhaps, one of the soldiers, who may have been particularly devoted to that Grand Duchess, had stolen her corpse and given it a secret burial.*

A Bolshevik official of standing had told a number of people that, according to Commissar Piatakov of Ekaterinburg, when the bodies of the Imperial Family

* The statement of the customs official was published in the *Hanover Anzeiger* on March 13th, 1927.

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were being loaded on the lorry to be taken to the forest, one body was found missing.*

A German medical assistant, taken prisoner by the Russians and later pressed into the service of the Red Army as a surgeon, testified that at the time of the murder of the Imperial Family he was stationed in Ekaterinburg, and that immediately upon the murder the Bolsheviki authorities had plastered the whole town with placards, announcing that several Red soldiers had disappeared on the night of July 17 with "female members" of the Emperor's family and valuables.

"The search for them was carried on zealously and roused terrible fury," the surgeon testified in part. "Many persons were imprisoned on the charge of having sheltered the fugitives, and shot after a summary trial. Houses were searched everywhere, and also the hospitals, especially the women's wards which were placed under strict supervision."

Several other German war prisoners gave similar testimony.*

Princess Helen, daughter of King Peter of Serbia and widow of Prince John of Russia, who was murdered by the Bolsheviki in Alapaevsk near Ekaterinburg, was herself in July 1918 in a Bolsheviki jail in Perm. She stated that shortly after the murder of the Imperial Family one of the Bolsheviki commissars brought to her cell a girl, whose name happened to be Anastasia Romanov, and asked her whether she could not possibly be Grand Duchess Anastasia. The commissar explained to Princess Helen that he knew

* Statement of Professor Ludwig Berg. Berlin, April 12th, 1928.

* Letters to Mrs. von Rathlef-Keilmann from Oberlaugenbielau, Silesia, of March 5th, 6th and 14th, 1927.

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Grand Duchess Anastasia to have escaped from Ekaterinburg.

Lieutenant-General Hérout of the Roumanian Police Department stated in a memorandum that he had questioned a Russian Armenian, Sarscho Gregorian, by name, now living in Roumania, who testified that on his flight from Russia he met Grand Duchess Anastasia and helped her to cross the Roumanian frontier on December 5, 1918. On May 6, 1919, while staying in Kishinev, Gregorian had received, through a messenger from Bucharest, five thousand lei sent him by Anastasia as a return for the help he had given her. Anastasia had also sent him a cross and an icon, and asked him not to baptise his three children until her return, because she wanted to be their godmother. According to General Hérout, the Gregorian children were still unbaptized in 1927.¹⁰

An employec of the Roumanian Ministry of War testified that, while on a business trip through Russia and Siberia in 1917 and early 1918, he had become well acquainted with a certain Pole, Stanislaw by name, who served at the time in the Red Army. Towards the end of November 1918 he met Stanislaw, now wearing neat civilian clothes, in the square of a Roumanian town. Having sworn him to complete secrecy, Stanislaw began to question him as to the best place for hiding an injured person. The Roumanian said that it was not so difficult, provided no crime or fraud of any kind was involved. Whereupon, Stanislaw broke down and weeping confessed that he had rescued one of the

¹⁰ Memorandum of the Ministry of the Interior, Secretariat of the Criminal and Police Department, Bucharest, signed by Lieutenant-General Hérout on May 4th, 1927.

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Emperor's daughters from Ekaterinburg. She was wounded in the head and in the face by the blow of a rifle butt. For the present she was still on the Russian side, in care of Stanislav's comrade, while Stanislav himself had come to Roumania to prepare a safe refuge for her.

The Roumanian's description of Stanislav's appearance tallied exactly with Anastasia's description of her rescuer, the so-called Alexander Tschaikovsky.¹¹

A Russian resident of Roumania testified that early in 1919 he was approached, through a jeweller he knew, by a man who was trying to sell a string of pearls. The pearls were well matched, of a yellowish tinge, and sewn into a piece of white cloth, in a manner which seemed to indicate that they had been worn around the waist.¹²

The description of the owner of the pearls once more matched Anastasia's description of Alexander Tschaikovsky. It was an established fact that each of the Grand Duchesses had worn, while in Ekaterinburg, a string of pearls, sewn in white linen, around her waist. Moreover, Anastasia had described her pearls as yellowish in color and stated that Tschaikovsky had sold them sometime in 1919.

Anastasia had stated to Mrs Rathlef that she had lived with the Tschaikovskys in Bucharest on a street called "Saint Voevoda." No map of Bucharest showed a street by such a name and at first the police of

¹¹ Written declaration made at the Headquarters of the Police and General Security Central Brigades, Roumania. Witnessed by Officiating Commissioner A Stojan. Original now in possession of M Zable.

¹² Letter to Lieutenant General Iléroua from S M Chokolov of Telshovo, Roumania, dated July 20th, 1927.

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Bucharest denied that such a street had ever existed. But a further investigation revealed the existence in the oldest part of Bucharest of a little crooked lane bearing the name of Saint Voevoda, or *Svente Voevoci* in Roumanian.

In 1925 in Berlin there appeared a young Russian, who came first to the Dalldorf asylum and asked for Anastasia Tschaikovsky. He was directed to Police Commissioner Gruenberg, but unfortunately the commissioner happened to be out of town. He located, however, a certain Miss Peuthert, who had known Anastasia in Dalldorf, and told her that he was the man who had brought Mrs. Tschaikovsky from Bucharest to Berlin, where she had vanished. He said further that Mrs. Tschaikovsky was Grand Duchess Anastasia and he identified a photograph of her which Miss Peuthert had in her possession. On the back of that photograph he wrote in the handwriting of a half-literate man, mixing Russian and Latin characters:

"Anastasia Nikolaeva Alexandereva. Petrograd."
And perpendicularly to that inscription: "Ivan Alexei. Petrograd."

According to the old Russian usage, still prevalent among the lower classes, particularly in Siberia, Anastasia Nikolaeva Alexandrova (which latter word peasants always did pronounce as "Alexandereva"), meant, "Anastasia, daughter of Nicholas, granddaughter of Alexander." Such indeed, Grand Duchess Anastasia was.

Whether the names "Ivan" and "Alexei" referred to one or two people did not appear clear. The name "Alexei" ran off the edge of the card and may have

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been an abbreviation of "Alexeiev" or "Alexeievich."

By another of those tragic accidents, of which the life of Grand Duchess Anastasia was so full, Miss Peuthert had advised the man to visit a certain Russian, who at one time had been among Anastasia's supporters, but later turned against her. The man did call at that Russian's house, but he had never been seen or heard of since. Miss Peuthert's description of the man's appearance was identical with Anastasia's description of the so-called Sergei Tschaikovsky, who had brought her to Berlin. There could, in fact, be no serious doubt that Sergei Tschaikovsky he actually was. Had he succeeded in getting in touch with Police Commissioner Gruenberg, Grand Duchess Anastasia's identity would have been formally established, without the slightest difficulty, and all her misfortunes ended.

Regarding the true identity of Anastasia's rescuers, the only things of which one could be certain were: first, that they had been soldiers of the Bolshevik detachment which guarded the Imperial Family in Ekaterinburg; second, that at least one of them was a Pole; third, that they could not have used their real names either during their flight across Russia or while in hiding in Roumania. Whether they were actually brothers, as they had told Anastasia, could not be certain. Indeed, in telling of Anastasia's rescue to his Roumanian friend, it was a comrade, not a brother, that Stanislaw had mentioned.

Be that as it may, the lists of all the Red soldiers, who had ever guarded the Imperial Family in Ekaterinburg contained the names of only two Poles—the

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brothers Nicholas and Stanislav Mishkevich—both natives of the Ekaterinburg province, but one of whom, Nicholas, had served as a sailor in Petrograd.”

Obviously, Stanislav Mishkevich was Anastasia’s rescuer, whom she knew as Alexander Tschaikovsky. As for the other Tschaikovsky he may have been Nicholas Mishkevich, in which case the word “Petrograd” he had written on the reverse of Anastasia’s photograph may have referred to the fact of his service in Petrograd. In some of the official records he had actually been distinguished from his brother, as “Mishkevich from Petrograd.”

On the other hand, the word “Petrograd” may have referred to Anastasia herself, for the peasants had never distinguished the many different residences of the Imperial Family in the vicinity of the capital, but considered Petrograd itself as their residence.

The inscription “Ivan Alexei” appeared of significance, because among the Red soldiers who guarded the Imperial Family in Ekaterinburg, there was one by the name of Ivan Alexeievich Starkov. It seemed likely that Nicholas Mishkevich, like most sailors of the time, had been a convinced Bolshevik, in which case he would hardly have assisted his brother in rescuing Anastasia. Ivan Alexeievich Starkov, on the other hand, had been, like Stanislav Mishkevich, a workman in one of the Ekaterinburg factories.

As far as Mrs. Tschaikovsky’s physical identification as Grand Duchess Anastasia was concerned, there was first of all her general appearance, which could only

¹³ The lists of names appear in all editions of the summary of Sokolov’s investigation.

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mean that she was either Anastasia or her double. But she possessed also at least three marks, which even Anastasia's double would not be likely to have. They were: a slight malformation of her feet, more pronounced on her right foot; the mark of a burned out wart on her left shoulder; and a scar on one of her fingers which had been caught in a carriage door, in Anastasia's early childhood.

Mrs. Tschaikovsky's many injuries showed that, like Grand Duchess Anastasia, she had been wounded by several bullets, struck on the face and chest with some heavy object, probably a rifle butt, and that her foot had been pierced with a Russian bayonet.

Her personality was also as unmistakably Anastasia's own personality, as it was that of a child of the last Russian Sovereigns. Even the husband of Grand Duchess Xenia, Grand Duke Alexander, had admitted in an interview, that Mrs. Tschaikovsky undeniably did possess the personality of Grand Duchess Anastasia. But being a spiritualist, Alexander advanced the theory that Mrs. Tschaikovsky could well possess Anastasia's soul, without actually being Anastasia. A rather interesting theory, somewhat complicated, however, by the fact that Mrs. Tschaikovsky also happened to possess Anastasia's body; but to possess both Anastasia's soul and Anastasia's body, yet remain a different person, would have been indeed an accomplishment.

In Mrs. Tschaikovsky's recollections concerning Anastasia's childhood, many pages of which had been taken down by different persons at different times, there was not a single impossible or obviously erroneous statement, while all her verifiable statements invariably

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proved to be correct in every detail. Yet many of these latter pertained to matters so little known, that it had taken months to obtain the necessary information about them. In several cases, where the recollections of other competent persons disagreed with those of Mrs. Tschaikovsky, further investigation had proved Mrs. Tschaikovsky to have been right.

During the many interviews with the different people Grand Duchess Anastasia had known in her childhood, Mrs. Tschaikovsky had never failed to recognize them, although, except in my own case, she had not been told in advance by whom she was going to be visited. In some cases she did not actually say who her visitor was, but made some remark which showed beyond doubt that she had recognized him. Thus, her first question to M. Gillard, whom she had not addressed by name, was:

"What became of your beard?"

M. Gillard had always worn a goatee, but had shaved it off after his separation from the Imperial Family in Siberia.

She gave a clear account of the tragic night of July 17 in Ekaterinburg. The last things she remembered were: the sight of her father, the Emperor, falling dead, shot through the head, and the scream of her sister, Olga, behind whose back she herself was hiding. Just before losing consciousness she had caught sight of the wall paper, and its design had so engraved itself on her memory that she described it in minutest detail. Her description matched exactly the samples of the wall paper taken from the cellar in which the Imperial Family had been murdered.

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Mrs. Tschaikovsky could not, incidentally, speak of those matters without immediately developing fever. When informed that the brother of the Emperor, Grand Duke Michael, had also been killed by the Bolsheviks, she suffered such a severe shock that she had to be kept in bed for two days.

For seven years constantly observed by doctors, nurses, and police officials, put many times under anæsthetics, often delirious from high fever, Mrs. Tschaikovsky had never displayed any signs of a personality different from the one she had in normal circumstances. Under all conditions she remained Grand Duchess Anastasia, preserved the same memories, expressed the same opinions, showed the same characteristics.

Then again, while possessing an astonishing amount of self-control in matters such as resistance to physical pain, patience in most trying circumstances, disregard of danger, she at the same time lacked every ability to control her own temper and fits of moodiness and in consequence was quite incapable of any pretense. She was also extremely stubborn, and frank in expressing her opinions of events and people—often devastatingly frank.

Of the doctors who had treated Mrs. Tschaikovsky, only one, Professor Rudnev, had known Grand Duchess Anastasia in her childhood. He was completely convinced that Mrs. Tschaikovsky was Grand Duchess Anastasia.

The other doctors could do no more than examine the question whether Mrs. Tschaikovsky was a fraud, a lunatic, a person under the influence of either

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hypnosis or autosuggestion. If she were not any of these, then—scientifically speaking—she could be only the person she claimed and believed herself to be, that is, Grand Duchess Anastasia of Russia.

A few characteristic passages from some of these long medical statements are here quoted:

Dr. Lothar Nobel of the Mommsen Sanatorium in Berlin wrote:

"I would like to state that there is no mental deficiency whatever. During this long period of observation I have not noticed in the patient any sign of mental derangement nor any kind of outside influence or autosuggestion . . . I will now add a few remarks concerning the identification of the patient. Of course, there can, on my part, be no question of proof. However, it appears to me impossible that her recollections depend on suggestion, and that the knowledge of many insignificant details is to be attributed to anything other than her own experiences."

Dr. Saathof of the Stillachhaus Nursing Home in Obersdorf:

"According to the impression which her nature and her remarks made upon me, I maintain that it is quite impossible that this woman has emerged from the lower orders. Her whole character . . . is so thoroughly cultivated, that, even if nothing at all were known of her origin, she must be regarded as the offspring of an old, well-cultured, and, in my opinion, extremely decadent family . . . I maintain that it is absolutely out of the question that this woman is deliberately acting the part of another; and that her general behaviour, if regarded as a whole, does not in any way gainsay that she is the person she says she is."

Dr. Theodor Eitel, also of Obersdorf:

"It was not until many weeks had passed that an improvement gradually set in. The extreme feeling of weariness

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ness and the general exhaustion disappeared. The wound in the left elbow gradually healed. Her nerves also became somewhat calmer. She developed a sense of confidence towards those with whom she came in immediate contact, felt more confident in herself, and, according as the trivial happenings of the day prompted her, began to talk spontaneously and naturally of her recollections of her childhood's days with her parents at the Imperial residence. She next spoke of events at the Court itself, of her parents and sisters, of journeys which she had undertaken with her parents to the Crimea and to Germany, and described a visit of Kaiser Wilhelm II to St. Petersburg. The accounts were incomplete, owing to her inadequate means of expression, but they were lucid and distinct, and were given without any exaggeration or desire to impress.

"As each month brought an increasing improvement in her nervous condition, so did her powers of memory and of comprehension grow stronger. The patient herself was conscious of this improvement, and said to me one day that she was 'now on the road towards becoming a normal person again.'

"The fearful chaos of mental impressions during the last six years, the awful memories and, in addition, the fantastic dreams during her frequent violent attacks of delirium, would surge up within her brain, and give her no peace. At times, the burden of the memory of what she had passed through would overcome her, and would plunge her in profound melancholy and despair. She once said: 'I must not let my mind dwell on all these things or I shall become ill again'. All this passed off during the last weeks of her recovery, so that the patient is now able to speak objectively and coherently of the various things and not in a disjointed way, as she used to do.

"Thus she can now give in a general way details of her whole past history. She speaks of her childhood, of her relationship with her parents, with her sisters, and particularly with her brother, as well as of matters of an entirely

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personal nature relating to their family life. She describes conditions at the outbreak of the War, her visits to the hospitals, the period of captivity, the illness of her brother during captivity, the needlework she did then, and the changed conditions of their life during that time. She makes all her statements with an expression of profound melancholy, and usually concludes by saying: 'Mighty Russia could not save one family.' In reply to my inquiry about her flight from Russia, she gives me a Berlin daily paper containing a long article dealing with it and remarks that some part of it is correct; but much of it is false. She herself cannot talk of it at present. She always speaks with extreme gratitude of her rescuer, Mr. Tschaikovsky. Regarding Bucharest itself, to which town she was brought, she mentions practically nothing. When, in the winter of 1919-1920 it became unsafe for her to stop there, she fled on foot across the border into Germany, presumably under particularly difficult circumstances and in terrible weather, and after having, some few months previously, given birth to a child. Having reached Germany, she contemplated proceeding to her relatives. Utterly exhausted and in despair, she states that she tried to commit suicide in February 1920. She describes this action as her greatest 'folly', and as being responsible for all the subsequent confusion and assumption that she was mentally deranged.

"In reply to the question why she did not announce herself, she states that she had written a letter to her aunt, Princess Henry of Prussia, and had hoped that matters would then be arranged for her.

"The foregoing statements were made by the patient during the last few weeks, after the improvement in her physical condition and in the state of her nerves had taken place. . . .

"If I now express an opinion on the question of her identity, I do so because my conclusions are based on systematic, objective observations carried on over a period of months

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would never have fought her as they did, had they not been convinced themselves that she actually was Grand Duchess Anastasia.

Indeed, what danger would an impostor represent to the Grand Duke of Hesse-Darmstadt? None!

If Anastasia was an impostor, her testimony concerning his war-time trip to Russia would be utterly valueless. Only if she was Grand Duchess Anastasia, only if she had actually seen him in the palace of her father, the Russian Emperor, and could give a convincing account of his visit, was she dangerous to him. And dangerous he obviously believed her to be, for only a casual examination of the cost of his campaign against her showed it to be at least \$10,000, and in all probability much more than that. What man in his senses would spend such an amount to expose an impostor, when the cleverest impostor could be proved to be such without the expenditure of a single cent?

Why would the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga become so excited over a mere impostor? There had been any number of them in the course of the last nine years and nobody had ever paid any attention to them.

But ever since their escape from Russia the sisters had been trying to find and inherit as much property of their late brother, the Emperor, as they could. They had found some in Germany, in Finland, but it was in England that the real fortune was supposed to be kept; and that fortune they could not locate until Anastasia had told them where to look for it.

Again, if Anastasia was an impostor, if her story about the fortune in England was untrue—as Xenia and Olga were now assuring all their friends—why



THE EMPEROR WITH GRAND DUCHESS TATIANA IN TOROLSK,
WINTER OF 1917-18

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. . . There are absolutely no symptoms of mental derangement, and no definite and conclusive indications of psychopathic conditions. The question of autosuggestion cannot be entertained. There is absolutely no sign of hysteria, delusions or hypnosis . . .

"In Mrs. Tschaikovsky one recognizes a personality of exceptionally high ethical qualities. Her high personal qualities, her noble nature, her pronounced truthfulness in small as well as in large matters, the distinguished detachment of her personality—all these features which she displayed to everyone right from the outset, force one to the conclusion that Mrs. Tschaikovsky, from the earliest childhood, had been brought up in the highest circles. . . .

"Our own observations, together with the statements of Professor Rudnev and the meeting at this place with Mrs. Melnik, daughter of the personal physician to the Czar, all force us to the conclusion that Mrs. Tschaikovsky is, in fact, Her Highness Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna."

Such briefly—only very briefly—was the nature of the evidence, confirming the fact of Grand Duchess Anastasia's identity. Moreover, a day hardly passed without some significant incident adding further to that evidence.

For instance, I was still in Berlin when Anastasia sent to Ambassador Zahle one of her photographs taken in Finland in 1914. Still as fond of practical jokes as she had always been, Anastasia sent the photograph, without any accompanying note or indication as to who its sender was. And Ambassador Zahle who, in the meantime, had been forced to sign a statement which denied her identity, answered her by return mail, thanking her for having sent him her "latest" picture and expressing his joy that, judging by that picture,

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her health must have greatly improved in the last few months.¹⁴

It was also in Berlin that I was visited by the notorious Prince Felix Youssoupov—the murderer of Rasputin and son-in-law of Grand Duchess Xenia. At first he pretended to be entirely impartial in regard to the case of "Mrs. Tschaikovsky," but he admitted finally that he had come with the definite purpose of luring me over into the camp of the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga.

I declined the invitation most emphatically, but in the course of one of our debates, Mrs. von Rathlef, who happened to be present, showed Youssoupov a recent photograph of "Mrs. Tschaikovsky's" hands. And Youssoupov who kept insisting that "Mrs. Tschaikovsky" did not possess the slightest resemblance to any member of the Imperial Family, seized that photograph and exclaimed:

"But where did you get this picture of Her Majesty's hands?"¹⁵

There were many other people—both friends and enemies of Anastasia—whom I met in Berlin. And the general conclusion I reached from all my investigations and conversations was of the most depressing kind.

The case of Grand Duchess Anastasia was so clear, so fully proved and verified in every detail, that nobody well familiar with it could conceivably have any doubts as to her identity. More than that, her opponents

¹⁴ The photograph in question is reproduced opposite page 26 upper left.

¹⁵ This incident occurred in the presence of Professor Rudnev and was confirmed by him in his affidavit of April 9th, 1929.

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then would they care about her at all? Only, if Anastasia's information concerning that fortune were true, did Xenia's and Olga's fear of her become at all explicable. But if she had a better knowledge of the Emperor's personal financial affairs than his own sisters had, how then could there be any doubt as to her identity? Still further, it was only if her identity was provable that Anastasia could interfere with Xenia's and Olga's plan of inheriting the Emperor's money. What bank would refuse to turn over money to rightful heirs because of unprovable pretensions of an obvious impostor?

Once again, why should Grand Duke Cyril be at all interested in an impostor? No doubt, his very hope of restoring monarchy in Russia was childish. Yet all Romanovs and a vast number of Russian monarchists did have such a hope—indeed, were certain that sooner or later monarchy in Russia would be restored. And if one assumed the possibility of a restoration, then it could not be denied that Anastasia's chances of being placed on the Russian throne were infinitely stronger than those of Grand Duke Cyril. But only the real Anastasia's. The very thought that a fraud—an insane Polish peasant, especially—could become the Empress of Russia was self-evidently absurd.

In short, the very people who denied Anastasia's identity and fought her with such ruthlessness and bitterness had also to be the people most convinced of the fact that she was, in truth, Grand Duchess Anastasia. Only that conviction could make them fear her and desire her undoing.

But this meant further that there was no hope of

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ever inducing them to acknowledge Anastasia. They did not have to be convinced of her identity, because they knew it; it was only because they did know it that they were persecuting her. All one could hope for was to force them to acknowledge Anastasia; and the only way to force them was to have Anastasia's identity formally established in a court of law.

Whether Anastasia herself wanted to take such a step I did not as yet know, and, of course, without her approval it neither could nor should be taken. But I did know that Anastasia wanted—desperately so—to have her true name and identity restored to her; that it was unbearable for her to live “as an eternal question mark,” as she herself had once expressed it; that to a woman of her pride and sensitivity the accusation of being an impostor was unendurable.

In consequence, one could hardly doubt, that sooner or later she would decide to start a legal fight for her recognition. In such a case, on whose support and assistance could she count? On nobody's.

Of her close relatives, it was, strangely enough, Cyril's brother, Grand Duke Andrew, who alone appeared at all friendly. He had even started an investigation of her case, but from what I had seen it had produced few tangible results.

How much Anastasia could count on her other partisans I already had the opportunity to find out, in connection with the matter of her passport. They did not even dare to state formally that she was a Russian.

The person who seemed willing to die for Anastasia, if necessary, was Mrs. von Rathlef. But she had neither money nor friends.

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No. It seemed clear that the Grand Duchess could not expect any permanent support in Europe. Whether I myself could obtain any help for her in the United States I did not know. But it was the only hope; and to the United States I hastened to return.

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IT WAS only at the time of my return to the United States in June, 1927, that I realised to what extent I had become Americanised during my four and a half years in this country. Not that Europe had lost any of its charm for me, but back in New York I experienced the pleasant sensation of having returned home. It was the more pleasant because at the time of my escape from Russia I had had little hope of ever feeling myself at home anywhere in the world. Perhaps, the phase of American life to which I had become particularly accustomed, and which more than anything else made me feel at home in this country, was the comparative straightforwardness and informality of human relations.

Had I never noticed any of the proverbial American hypocrisy? I had—plenty of it; but compared to Europe even hypocrisy in this country was too obvious to matter much. Moreover, that hypocrisy made itself felt chiefly in the realm of abstract ideas—moral and political ones especially. In Europe it was not mere hypocrisy, but a falsehood, often subtle, almost unnoticeable, yet all-pervading and profoundly devastating.

Was it hypocrisy, for instance, on my cousin's part to say that Mrs. Tschaikovsky was either Grand Duchess Anastasia or a miracle and that he did not be-

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lieve in miracles, yet insist in the same breath that he was not at all convinced of her identity? Whatever the proper name for such an attitude could be, it made one feel as in one of those dreams wherein the food served never gets into one's mouth, the money suddenly acquired fails to make one rich, and the beautiful woman vanishes without trace at the very moment when the reality of her love promised to become a certainty.

Again, Europeans were so much more polite than Americans; and it was pleasant to be among polite people—for a while. But one soon realised that all those bows, smiles, protestations of "perfect respect and equal devotion," were mere formalities which meant nothing at all. One constantly saw people treating each other as the closest friends, only to discover that they were actually the worst of enemies.

How pleasant, for instance, my conversation with the lamentable Felix Youssoupov would have sounded to an outsider. "You alone of all the people connected with the case of Mrs. Tsehaikovsky," he was assuring me, "stand above all suspicion, are, in virtue of your name and reputation, immune to all accusations of being motivated by ulterior considerations."

Needless to say, I had to answer him in kind and we had finally exhausted all superlatives in extolling each other's virtues. But on the same day the good Felix wrote a letter to the sister of the late Empress, the Dowager Marchioness of Milford Haven, begging her, in case I were to visit her, not to believe a single word of mine. My own opinion of Felix the bravest editor would never have dared to print.

Yct-Youssoupov was by no means the most danger-

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ous type, because, at least, to use a Russian expression, he bore his passport on his face. But there were many other people, connected with Anastasia's case in one way or another, of whom I was never able to tell—who, perhaps, did not know themselves—on which side they actually belonged.

Nor could the question be answered on the basis of their actual beliefs. Just as so many people were hostile to Anastasia and denounced her as an impostor, for the very reason that they knew her to be the Grand Duchess, so there were enough adventurers quite willing to side with Anastasia, without having any conviction in the matter, simply in the hope of deriving eventually some benefit from such a connection.

Not a few there were also, who pretended to be Anastasia's friends and even kept offering all sorts of evidence substantiating her claim, but evidence which upon closer examination proved to be spurious. Some were, no doubt, doing it with deliberate malice, in the hope of exposing their own fabrications, were I naïve enough to use them.

But to me at least, most exasperating were the people, like my own cousin, who said one thing in private and another in public, who never stated clearly their actual beliefs, wanted to serve one side, yet remain on friendly terms with the other, and above everything else were not even conscious of being insincere. In short, they wanted to eat their cake and have it, or, as Russians say, acquire capital and remain innocent. In their own estimation they acted not only in a perfectly honourable, but also the only sensible way. Indeed, by never saying or doing anything definite, they

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could never be accused of having said or done the wrong thing. That they also could never be credited with having said or done the right thing did not seem to disturb them in the least.

But in New York people were different. They did not pretend to be friendly when they were actually hostile, nor to believe things which they did not. In New York I did not have to strain myself guessing whether Mr. So-and-So or Mrs. Such-and-Such were likely to help Grand Duchess Anastasia. The only trouble was that most of them were not.

Even with the publication of my articles on Anastasia I ran into considerable difficulties. It so happened that the syndicate, with which I had reached a tentative agreement before going to Europe, had been given a new general-manager—a complete stranger to me. Besides, at the time of my original negotiations with the syndicate, none of us knew what articles, if any, I was going to write, or what was the actual status of the so-called Mrs. Tschaikovsky's case. But when the editors discovered how bitter a controversy, involving so many powerful personages, had developed about the question of Mrs. Tschaikovsky's identity they became scared.

In the end, however, they agreed to print most of my material, but in the form of a personal account rather than a legal brief, as I had planned, and with the description of the various plots against Anastasia limited to vague hints which appeared none too convincing.

In spite of such limitations, my articles did produce a certain impression. Unfortunately, the curiosity they aroused in the United States was a purely academic

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one. In Europe they caused a minor storm and did scare Anastasia's enemies considerably. They also provoked M. Gillard into writing a letter to the General-Manager of my syndicate, offering—for a price—to expose both "Mrs. Tschaikovsky" and the conspiracy I had supposedly organised in her favour. That letter proved of decided help to me.

"A fine gentleman that Gillard must be!" the General-Manager, who until then had shown very little enthusiasm for Anastasia's case, said to me. "Now I can well believe all you say about Anastasia and her enemies. I am glad we published your articles and shall publish more any time you may want to give the matter further publicity."

It was a most valuable offer of which I actually availed myself about a year later.

In the meantime, however, my main task remained to bring Grand Duchess Anastasia over to the United States, as soon as possible; but all my efforts to interest in her case such of my friends and acquaintances, who had enough money and connections to be of help to me proved futile.

I knew a number of wealthy and influential people in this country, and some of them had always treated me in the friendliest manner and, often enough, helped me personally. But whether it was their distrust of my poverty or my own distrust of their wealth, or yet the fact that few of them seemed much interested in anything, except business, golf, and cocktail parties—none of which interested me—my relations with them had never been quite as intimate as with such of my friends, who were as poor or almost as poor as myself.

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The latter knew me and trusted me and became as excited over the fate of Grand Duchess Anastasia as I was myself. But, like myself, they personally were quite unable to do anything for her. As for my wealthy friends and acquaintances, they listened to all my reports on Anastasia with benevolent and patronizing smiles, which indicated clearly that they regarded me as either slightly unbalanced or associated with some kind of racket. To be sure, they did not voice such suspicions in my presence, but I learned soon enough that they were expressing them in my absence. And, of course, whether they suspected me of being not quite right in the head or of having devised a scheme for borrowing money, they all expressed their polite regrets that they could not possibly be of any help to me.

Among the local Russians, I knew but very few people and could count the real friends on my fingers. These latter were all as poor as myself, and some—impossible as it might seem—even poorer. I did not, therefore, even attempt to approach any of them, but the news of my recognition of Grand Duchess Anastasia spread rapidly through the Russian colony and, on the whole, provoked open hostility.

Some of the Russians also accused me of advocating Anastasia's cause in the hope of making money by it, but the majority of them, not being as financially minded as Americans, were more inclined to suspect me of sinister political conspiracies.

It was the same resourceful M. Gillard who, as far back as the beginning of 1926, had started the legend that Grand Duchess Anastasia had been "invented" by the Bolsheviks; although what the Bolsheviks could

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In the meantime, the Leuchtenbergs were getting restless and asking me in every letter, when it would be possible for "the Little One" to start for the United States.

I had made the round of all my wealthier friends, talked to some of them not once, but many times—all to no avail. I went so far as to approach people, whom I knew only very casually and even some whom I had never known at all. But all my efforts proved vain. Worse than that, my very persistence seemed to make people only the more suspicious of my true motives; some became well-nigh insulting.

My own uncle, Peter Botkin, who was married to a wealthy American, not only refused me all help but from his retreat in Switzerland began to write letters to all his wife's relatives in this country, trying to convince them of the malicious nature of my intentions. To be sure, I should never have approached him, for he himself had confessed to me that "Emperor" Cyril had made him his "Foreign Minister." But I had hoped against hope that this uncle, who was always boasting about his loyalty to the late Sovereigns, might forget all such nonsense and come to the defence of the unfortunate Grand Duchess.

On the whole, however, his letters to his American relatives and friends proved, if anything, of help to me, just as M. Gillard's letter to my syndicate had. His attacks on me were so vitriolic and his accusations against me—which naturally included the same old story about the Masonic super-government—so fantastic, that they aroused far greater scepticism than my own efforts to prove that the so-called Mrs. Tschajkov-

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sky was in reality Grand Duchess Anastasia. I received even a few sympathetic messages from the recipients of my uncle's letters.

My attempts to stir up such members of the Russian Imperial Family, who had not as yet taken any part in the case, also proved futile. In those days the former Commander-in-Chief, Grand Duke Nicholas, was still alive, and while making no claims to the throne had nevertheless announced his intention of marching into Russia at the head of the so-called White troops and establishing a Government of his own. He had already formed a cabinet in Paris and in 1926 offered me the post of his Secretary of the Treasury. I had declined the honour but corresponded with the Grand Duke from time to time through his "Prime-Minister" Prince Obolensky.

When I had asked my cousin, Sergius, what the Grand Duke's attitude towards Anastasia was, he answered:

"Not unfriendly, and he may even acknowledge her formally as Grand Duchess Anastasia, provided he could be convinced that such a move on his part would cause sufficient embarrassment to Cyril."

I wrote a long letter to Grand Duke Nicholas, but received no answer except indirectly, through a statement to the press, wherein the Grand Duke announced that he had received an exhaustive report on the subject of Mrs. Tschaikovsky's identity and was studying it with interest. He continued to study it with interest to the very day of his death several years later.

Grand Duke Andrew alone wrote me several very

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friendly letters, admitting his virtual certainty that Mrs. Tschaikovsky or "A. T." as he called her, was actually his cousin, Grand Duchess Anastasia. He even offered his help in establishing her identity through the courts, but every one of his letters stressed the need of money for the purpose. To obtain Anastasia's formal recognition through the courts, \$50,000 was needed, which, he hoped, I would raise in the United States; in the meantime, in order to continue his investigation, \$4,000 was necessary, which he hoped I could secure at once.

But in the meantime, day after day passed, and week after week, and not only had I failed to raise a single cent for Anastasia's journey to the United States, but my very hope of ever raising it was beginning to wane rapidly.

Those were extremely trying days. Luckily, a few friends stood loyally by me and helped me to keep up my courage. I also found much consolation in writing my first novel, which subsequently was published under the title: *The God Who Didn't Laugh*.

Then, towards the end of the summer, an old friend of my family, Mrs. Margharita Derfelden, told me that Princess Xenia of Russia was eager to see me and hear my story about Grand Duchess Anastasia. Mrs. Derfelden was by birth an American, but had been married first to a Russian naval officer, who had perished in the Japanese war, and later to a General of the Emperor's suite, Christopher Derfelden. After the Revolution, Mrs. Derfelden, whose second husband had died some time previously, returned with her two daughters to the United States.

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Mrs. Derfelden had been a close friend of several members of the Imperial Family, including Grand Duke George, the father of Princess Xenia. "Little Xenia," as the Princess was often called to distinguish her from the Emperor's sister, Grand Duchess Xenia, had married Mr. William B. Leeds after the Revolution and settled permanently in the United States.

Mrs. Derfelden, who was very fond of the "little" Xenia, had often spoken to me about her and several times offered to introduce me to her. But as Xenia was not only a princess, but also the wife of a wealthy American, and so many Russian refugees were trying to win her favour, I preferred to keep away from her. Now, however, that the Princess herself became interested in the case of Grand Duchess Anastasia, whose second cousin, incidentally, she was, I was naturally only too glad to accept her invitation and at the appointed hour arrived at the Leeds' estate in Oyster Bay.

The only time I had seen Princess Xenia in Russia was several years before the war, when I met her with her father, Grand Duke George, at an exhibition of modern French painters. Being by several years my junior she was then but a little girl—a very lovely little girl with beautiful brown curls, brown eyes, and dressed up like an expensive doll.

She was now in her early twenties and, as I had known from pictures of her long before my visit to Oyster Bay, unusually handsome. In real life I found her even more so than in her pictures. She was a woman of medium height, slim, well proportioned, with regular features, dark brown bobbed hair, large dark eyes, a straight nose, and the kind of small but

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full-lipped mouth, which the Russians call a "butterfly mouth." She looked so young that it was difficult to realise that she had been married for some time and had a daughter several years old.

I could see little resemblance to the Emperor's daughters in her appearance, but a great deal of it in her manners, even in her speech, for like the Grand Duchesses she seemed to speak Russian with an English accent and English with a Russian accent, but a kind of accent which only added charm to her speech. Being near-sighted she had the habit of looking at one very attentively through her lorgnette, which she raised constantly to her eyes.

Altogether Princess Xenia impressed me as an extremely attractive person, but our conversation did not begin in a very friendly manner. She received me with considerable coolness, which annoyed me the more because I had never asked to be received by her, but came in response to her own invitation. Moreover, she started at once to complain—rather tactlessly it seemed to me—about the many Russian refugees, who were pestering her with requests for money.

"All Russians are such beggars," she observed. "They always beg for money."

"Indeed, they do," I agreed. "*As a matter of fact*, I have in my pocket a letter from Your Highness' cousin, one of the Grand Dukes, wherein he asks me for money. It is just as Your Highness says—Russians always beg for money."

Princess Xenia looked at me with a puzzled expression on her face, but in a moment we both burst into laughter. Instantly the Princess became a perfectly

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natural and friendly person, and I proceeded to report to her all I knew about the case of Grand Duchess Anastasia. Xenia listened attentively and when I had finished, said:

"Now I can hardly doubt that she is actually Grand Duchess Anastasia. What a tragedy! I must do something for her!"

"There is only one thing I cannot quite understand," I said. "It is clear to me that the people, who persecute Grand Duchess Anastasia, are not only acting in bad faith in denying her identity, but are persecuting her for the very reason that they are convinced of it. And the motives of at least two of them, the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt and Grand Duke Cyril, are quite obvious to me. What puzzles me is the rôle of the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga. Every bit of evidence indicates clearly that they are denouncing Anastasia as an impostor, because they are trying to inherit her fortune kept in the Bank of England. But it is hard for me to believe that the sisters of the Emperor could be capable of such disloyalty."

Princess Xenia remained silent for a while and then said: "After all the things I myself have seen and experienced, I am ready to believe almost anything."

We discussed the case of Grand Duchess Anastasia further, going into many details. In the end Princess Xenia said that she was thinking seriously of inviting Anastasia to Oyster Bay. She told me, however, that strange as it seemed, she was always in financial difficulties, and that it would perhaps take her a little time to get the money necessary for Anastasia's journey. Also, before doing anything definite, she wanted to

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consult her uncle, Prince Christopher of Greece, whose arrival she expected in a few days.

"But what shall we do about the Grand Duchess's passport?" I asked. "I do not think that any American Consul is likely to visa the sort of provisional certificate of identity she has."

"Don't worry about that," Princess Xenia said. "I am certain that I could arrange the matter through the Secretary of Labor. He served in his youth in one of the Leeds' factories and is very much devoted to the Leeds. Besides, Anastasia will need only a tourist visa, which is not so difficult to obtain. Why should anybody object to her visit, once I shall guarantee her maintenance?"

When the time came for me to leave, Princess Xenia very graciously offered me her car. But her chauffeur happened to have his day off and I did not know how to drive a car.

"I can't drive very well either," the Princess said. "I am just trying to learn. If you want to take a chance I shall drive you to Hempstead. Only I warn you that it may cost you your life."

I was only too willing to risk my life in so pleasant a manner, but we reached Hempstead without mishap.

I was both delighted with the results of my meeting with Princess Xenia and bewitched by her personality. To have Grand Duchess Anastasia come to the United States as a guest, not of some strange Americans, but her own cousin, a Princess of the Imperial Family, surpassed my best hopes. The more I thought of the situation, the stronger I felt inclined to believe that the

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solution of Anastasia's case would, under the circumstances, become only a matter of time.

It would be impossible for Princess Xenia to have Grand Duchess Anastasia in her house for any length of time, without becoming fully convinced of her identity. And the testimony of Princess Xenia would mean ever so much more than the testimony of all the other people who had to date acknowledged Anastasia, including myself.

Indeed, the acknowledgment of Anastasia by Xenia would eliminate, I thought, all need of any court action. Princess Xenia was very much liked by both Queen Mary of England and the Russian Empress Dowager Marie. And, needless to say, were Anastasia acknowledged formally by Queen Mary and Empress Marie, her trials would be over.

A week or so after our first meeting, Princess Xenia invited me again to Oyster Bay to meet Prince Christopher at dinner. He was a son of a Danish father—King George I of Greece, brother of the Russian Empress Dowager Marie—and a Russian mother—Queen Olga of Greece, granddaughter of Emperor Nicholas I of Russia. Thus, he had nothing Greek about him save his title; and even that he had had to change officially to "Prince of Denmark," at the time of his marriage to the elder Mrs. Leeds, whom the Greek King had refused to accept into the Greek Royal Family. Christopher was related to both the Leeds, for Princess Xenia was his niece and Mr. Leeds his step-son.

He was a man in his early forties, rather tall but plump and not exactly regal in appearance. At first glance I should have taken him for a German of the

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middle classes. His manners too were not especially dignified. He fidgeted, giggled, and chatted incessantly in a mixture of several languages, including the Russian, which, by the way, he spoke without an accent. The general impression he made on me was not exactly pleasant, and I could find not the slightest resemblance in him to the late Russian Emperor, whose first cousin he was. But in a superficial, drawing-room manner he was quite amusing, for he possessed a certain wit and an inexhaustible store of funny anecdotes.

Princess Xenia asked me to tell her uncle the story of Grand Duchess Anastasia, and, as soon as I had finished my account, the Prince declared that there could not be the slightest doubt as to Anastasia's identity. I felt rather astonished at the ease with which he allowed himself to be convinced. When I asked him what he thought of the rôle of Grand Duchess Olga in the matter, he shrugged his shoulders and with a wave of his hand said:

"Ah, Olga knows, of course, better than anybody else that she is Anastasia."

Xenia and I exchanged triumphant glances.

"Then would you help us with our problem?" asked Princess Xenia, turning to her uncle. "We both feel that Anastasia is not safe in Europe, and I want to bring her over here. But it may take me some time to make all the necessary arrangements, and it is important to get Anastasia out of Germany as soon as possible. You have a lovely palace in Italy and, as far as I know, nobody lives in it. Would you permit me to have Anastasia taken at once to your palace in Italy, whence I shall eventually bring her over to this country?"

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"An excellent ideal!" Prince Christopher exclaimed "Ycs, she will be quite comfortable in my palace in Italy"

Again the Princess and I exchanged congratulatory glances

After dinner Prince Christopher produced a magazine with one of Gillard's articles and proceeded, much to my satisfaction, to criticise it ruthlessly Anybody could see what Gillard is, the Prince asserted

"There is only one unpleasant feature in the whole affair," Christopher said to me "Somehow Anastasia seems to be always surrounded by Jews How do you explain that?"

"What Jews?" I asked, astonished

"Well, how about Mrs von Rathlef Keilmann?" the Prince asked "Keilmann—isn't that her maiden name? It sounds Jewish to me"

"It easily may be Jewish," I agreed, "although she told me that she was born in the Lutheran faith and some years ago was converted to Roman Catholicism But it is quite possible, of course, that she is of Jewish descent"

"And who is that Dr Sonnenschein, who at one time appears to have been interested in Anastasia?" the Prince asked

I felt rather astonished that Christopher, who at the beginning of our conversation assured me that he had never before heard any mention of Anastasia's case, now displayed such familiarity with it The role of Dr Sonnenschein had not been a very prominent one

"Dr Sonnenschein," I explained, "is a Roman Catholic priest, and the head of a charitable Catholic

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organization. He is well known in Berlin as a philanthropist. He became interested in the case through Police Commissioner Gruenberg, and a few months before the appearance on the scene of Ambassador Zahle, had arranged to have the Grand Duchess admitted into a Roman Catholic hospital."

"I see," the Prince said. "Nevertheless, Sonnenschein is a Jewish name."

"It sounds Jewish enough," I agreed. "But what of it?"

"Oh, nothing," Christopher said. "Except that it is unfortunate for Anastasia to have so many Jewish names associated with her story."

"How could Anastasia be held responsible for the names of the people who happened to come to her aid?" Princess Xenia observed.

"Of course, she couldn't," Christopher hastened to agree.

The rest of the evening passed most pleasantly and it was only after one o'clock in the morning that I left Oyster Bay. It now became difficult to doubt that Anastasia's trials were indeed over. Even if I did not like Prince Christopher very much, I was greatly pleased by his repeated promises to do everything he could for Grand Duchess Anastasia. He certainly could do a lot. I also felt very grateful to him for having placed his palace in Italy at Anastasia's disposal. As for Princess Xenia, she had assured me in the course of the evening, that she could no longer have the slightest doubt in regard to Anastasia's identity; and I could see that she was extremely pleased with my success in having also convinced her uncle of it.

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But my joy at this new development proved somewhat premature. On the following day Princess Xenia called me up on the telephone and said

"I don't know whether it is my uncle or I, but one of us must be crazy."

"Why, what's happened, Your Highness?" I asked, alarmed.

"Did Uncle Christopher agree yesterday to have Anastasia taken to his palace in Italy, or didn't he?" Xenia asked.

"Of course, he did," I answered.

"And did he tell us that he was quite convinced that Anastasia was actually Anastasia?" she asked again.

"Of course, he did," I repeated. "In fact, he was so positive about it that I had the impression that he must have known all about the case and been convinced of Anastasia's identity for quite some time."

"Well, to day I asked him when Anastasia could be taken to his palace in Italy," Princess Xenia said, "and he threw up his arms and began to shout 'Keep me out of this mess and, if you want my advice, keep out of it yourself!' How do you explain that?"

"I don't," I said. "It seems altogether inexplicable."

"If he does not believe her to be Anastasia and never wanted to help her," the Princess continued, "then why didn't he tell us so from the very first? What was he thinking about all evening yesterday, when he kept assuring us of his willingness to help us?"

"Indeed, what was he thinking of?" I said. "But this is just the sort of thing you meet with in this case at every step."

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"I must say that I no longer understand anything," Princess Xenia said.

"Neither do I," I confessed. "But what are your own plans now?"

"My plans have not changed," the Princess said emphatically. "I will bring Anastasia over!"

I heaved a sigh of relief. "This is terribly good of you!" I said.

"But you must understand that the situation has now become much more difficult for me," Xenia said. "I counted on my uncle's support, but now I must do everything myself."

"As long as Your Highness remains determined to help the Grand Duchess, I am certain that everything will come out well," I assured her. "On my part I will gladly do anything I can to help you."

The Princess promised to get in touch with me soon, and hung up the receiver.

Annoying as that little contretemps with Prince Christopher was, I felt by no means discouraged. On the contrary, I had not liked that prince, anyway. But every time I saw Princess Xenia or only heard her voice over the telephone, I felt more and more convinced that in her I had found at last one member of the Russian Imperial Family—not counting Grand Duchess Anastasia—whom I could respect, trust, and faithfully serve. Indeed, now that in her very first attempt to help Grand Duchess Anastasia she had met with that same duplicity on the part of her own uncle that Anastasia had faced on the part of so many of her relatives, I felt eager to assist Princess Xenia, not only

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because of her kindness towards Anastasia, but also for her own sake.

Nothing could now please me more than to see so charming a person as Princess Xenia become Anastasia's saviour, and receive all the acclaim and gratitude of which her ultimate victory in so noble a fight would ensure her. In truth, how wonderful and moving it would be, I mused, to have these two lovely princesses, Anastasia, "the Little One," and the "little Xenia"—together defying and defeating the hosts of their bitter enemies. I even wrote a letter to Princess Xenia, expressing my feelings on the subject and the devotion that she inspired in me.

She seemed pleased with my letter and reiterated her determination, not only to bring Grand Duchess Anastasia to this country, but to obtain her formal recognition. She, however, asked me in return, first, to help her with all the necessary formalities and correspondence, and second, to consider her in charge of the situation and refrain from any action of my own—especially from giving the case any further publicity.

To the Imperial Family nothing was so abhorrent as publicity, Princess Xenia explained. Besides, neither publicity nor any court action would now be necessary. It was her plan to bring about a happy solution of Anastasia's case through her family connections. She would let the Grand Duchess have a good rest in the peace and safety of Oyster Bay and then take her quietly on a visit to the Empress Dowager.

I was delighted with this plan. To be sure, it was said that the Empress Dowager refused to believe in the tragic death of her son and grandchildren, and for

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that reason alone she would not listen to the story of Grand Duchess Anastasia, which confirmed the fact of the Ekaterinburg massacre. But I was not afraid of that. Not for a moment did I doubt that a single glance at her youngest granddaughter would suffice to open the Empress's eyes to the truth and make her hasten to Anastasia's support.

Although I no longer had any respect for Anastasia's Russian aunts and German uncle, I still had enough respect for Royalty collectively, to be only too pleased with the possibility of having Grand Duchess Anastasia reinstated in all her rights, without making the ugly conduct of her nearest relatives publicly known.

I gladly promised Princess Xenia to do nothing without her permission, and to devote myself entirely to the duties of being her assistant in the case.

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PRINCESS XENIA kept her promise and invited Grand Duchess Anastasia to come to Oyster Bay. The Leuchtenbergs were delighted and, according to them, the Grand Duchess herself was very pleased. Through the united efforts of the American Consul in Munich and my cousin, Sergius, a way was found to grant Anastasia a visa, permitting her to visit the United States for a minimum stay of six months.

The sudden zeal displayed by Cousin Sergius amused me not a little. In all his previous negotiations with me he had seemed afraid of doing anything and dismissed all my plans and suggestions as impossible. But now that Princess Xenia had become interested in the matter, Sergius displayed quite astonishing energy and resourcefulness. Luckily, my good cousin did not suspect in the least, that actually he was still corresponding with me, for Princess Xenia did no more than affix her signature to the letters I wrote.

I was overjoyed at such a rapid materialization of my dream. Soon nothing remained except for either Princess Xenia herself—as she had originally planned—or some other person of her choice to go to Germany and bring the Grand Duchess over. But week after week passed and nothing happened. Whenever I asked Princess Xenia how soon she hoped to send for Anas-

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tasia she answered evasively that she was not yet quite ready.

I noticed that her attitude towards me was no longer as friendly as it had been at first. She also seemed worried and one day said to me :

"You cannot imagine all the trouble I am having on account of Anastasia. Nobody wants to help me. All my relatives make fun of me. Uncle Christopher is quite impossible. If he only notices that I am writing a letter to somebody about Anastasia he begins to laugh, dance around my chair, push my elbow, call me a fool, and advise me to keep out of 'that mess' as he calls it. It is very trying."

I felt great sympathy for the Princess. Nobody knew better than I all the unpleasantness to which one became exposed by siding with Grand Duchess Anastasia. Besides, Princess Xenia had always been on the best of terms with her namesake who was Anastasia's chief opponent—Grand Duchess Xenia; two or three of the Grand Duchess's sons happened to be at the time in the United States and often visited Princess Xenia in Oyster Bay. Except for her sister, Nina, and her uncle, Christopher, they were the only relatives she had in this country, and she was naturally loath to quarrel with them. Having myself incurred the enmity of my own uncle, Peter Botkin, I could imagine only too clearly Xenia's predicament.

But at the same time Grand Duchess Anastasia too was Xenia's cousin—the only living child of her Emperor. To be sure, Xenia had not as yet seen Anastasia, but she told me several times that she had no doubt as to the Grand Duchess's identity. These as-

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sections on Xenia's part did not astonish me, convinced as I was that most members of the Imperial Family knew only too well who the so-called Mrs. Tschaikovsky actually was. And it seemed clear to me that once Xenia was convinced of Anastasia's identity, she was as much obligated to help her as I was myself.

Xenia's position was not an easy one, of course. She needed a determination well-nigh heroic; but I felt confident that it could be expected from her. I only wished that I could be of some help to her in that struggle against her own family. But she grew steadily more reserved and aloof, so that all I could do was to pray that she might be given the power necessary to fulfill her heavy duty.

One day the Princess said to me: "I have told you from the very start that I had no money of my own; and now I must tell you that I am also quite unable to get any." -

I was not a little shocked. "Do you mean," I asked, "that you no longer plan to bring Grand Duchess Anastasia over to this country?"

"No," Xenia answered. "I still want to bring her over and, if she does come over, shall be happy to support her indefinitely. I have even given this promise to the Immigration authorities in Washington. It is simply that I have no money for her transportation, so that unless you undertake to raise the money Anastasia's journey cannot be accomplished."

I explained to the Princess that before she had approached me, I had already exhausted all my possibilities and found it impossible to raise a penny. I

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was willing to try again, but had little reason to hope for success.

"Another trouble is," I added, "that I am already being accused on all sides of having acknowledged Anastasia merely in the hope of making money by championing her case. If I start again asking people for money, they will become the more convinced that these accusations against me are true. Frankly, I care little what stupid people say about me, but for the present I happen to be the only person in the world who has acknowledged the Grand Duchess publicly. Consequently, any suspicions in regard to my own disinterestedness and sincerity in the matter serve to make everybody the more sceptical in regard to Anastasia's identity. On the other hand, nobody could be insane enough to suspect you—the wife of William Leeds—of being motivated by a desire for financial profits. You, therefore, are in a position to ask for money, without arousing any further doubts about Anastasia's claims."

"It may be so," Princess Xenia agreed. "But the fact remains that I do not know where to get any money. If you think that my name will help, you may tell all the people you approach, that it is I who need the money. Tell them also to make out their cheques to my name. Then nobody could accuse you of any dishonest intentions."

It seemed a weird idea for me—a penniless refugee—to seek a loan for the very wealthy Mrs. Leeds. But I was not in a position to refuse my co-operation in any plan, no matter how fantastic. Were I to say, "I cannot do it," Princess Xenia would, no doubt, answer: "If

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probably create such a scandal as to affect the results of the forthcoming general elections. Dr. Lucke then immediately dropped his suit.

I felt that these were no mean victories, at which all friends of Grand Duchess Anastasia had every reason to rejoice; and so, indeed, they all did—all, that is, except Princess Xenia. Mrs. Derfelden informed me that the Princess was extremely angry because of my article in the *Herald-Tribune*, accused me of having broken my promise not to give further publicity to Anastasia's case, and threatened to withdraw her invitation to the Grand Duchess. I requested to see Princess Xenia personally, and a few days later she asked me to meet her at Mrs. Derfelden's apartment in Hempstead.

Much to my regret I found that Xenia was not only angry, but unaccountably upset. She repeated all her accusations against me, as Mrs. Derfelden had reported them, as well as her threat to cancel her invitation to the Grand Duchess. It dismayed me that my relations with the Princess, who still seemed to me so charming a person, were assuming such an inimical aspect. But it was to Grand Duchess Anastasia that my devotion belonged first and above all, and I frankly pointed the fact out to the Princess.

"As for our agreement," I said, "it seems to me that you—not I—have broken it. It was in the summer that you had promised to bring the Grand Duchess over, but now we are already in November. I have agreed to do nothing without your permission, for the sole reason that you have promised to take complete charge of Anastasia's affairs. Unfortunately, you have not done

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you cannot do it, I cannot bring Anastasia over " What would then become of the Grand Duchess?

And so, with the courage of despair, I set out once more on that most hateful of all ventures—walking from the door of one wealthy man to another, begging for money. The results were just such as I had expected. They all refused—some with undisguised insolence. Nor did Mrs Leeds' name prove of the slightest help.

"Just wait a moment," one of the wealthy men I had approached said to me. "Do you mean to say that were I willing to put up the money for that Grand Duchess's journey, I should have to make the cheque out to Mrs Leeds?"

"That is exactly what I mean," I answered.

"But I can't understand it," the man exclaimed. "Mrs Leeds is one of the wealthiest women in the country. Why should she accept a cheque from me?"

"That I don't know, I am sure," I said. "Why not take it up with Mrs Leeds directly?"

But the man refused to do even that. He seemed to think me completely crazy, nor could I exactly blame him.

And the situation in Europe was again getting worse. According to all reports, the Grand Duke of Hessen Darmstadt was girding himself for another attack on Grand Duchess Anastasia. Indeed, a formal complaint was soon made against Mrs von Rathlef, to the effect that she had bribed police officials, while investigating the past of the now so famous Francisca. About the same time Dr Lucke, the editor who had published the story about Francisca, brought a libel suit against the

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newspaper *Tägliche Rundschau*, which had accused him editorially of having accepted a bribe from the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt.

The Leuchtenbergs were growing panicky and asking me in every letter what was delaying Grand Duchess Anastasia's proposed journey to the United States. I kept inventing all the excuses I could think of, for I knew that it would be fatal to tell them that Princess Xenia claimed to have no money for Anastasia's transportation. Other friends of Anastasia wrote alarming letters to me, insisting that either the Grand Duchess had to be taken out of Germany immediately, or else some measures taken to scare off the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt.

I went to the foreign editor of the *New York Herald-Tribune* and, having explained the situation, asked him whether he would agree to publish an article containing the story of Hessen-Darmstadt's war-time trip to Russia, and his consequent fear of Anastasia as the only living witness of that trip. Rather to my astonishment the editor agreed and the article was duly published.

Its effect fulfilled my best expectations. . While accepted placidly enough in this country, it raised another storm in Europe, and the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt hastened to withdraw from the battlefield. About the same time Mrs. von Rathlef was acquitted in court of all the accusations made against her. Finally, when Dr. Lucke's libel suit came up for trial, the judge warned him that he would have to summon the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt as one of the witnesses, and that the revelations likely to be made at the trial would

A PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDY OF
AT VARIOUS AGES BEGINNING



1901



1905



1910



1911

THE GRAND DUCHESS ANASTASIA

WITH THE YEAR OF HER BIRTH



1913



1914



1925

(During her illness after the rescue)



TODAY

(Restored to health)

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so. Now you threaten to withdraw your invitation to Anastasia. But what is the good of your invitation, when none of us has the money to pay for her transportation?"

"I promised to bring her over and I will bring her over, but only if you will not publish another word about her," Xenia said.

"I am afraid that I can no longer be satisfied with such abstract promises," I said. "Just when does Your Highness expect to bring the Grand Duchess over to this country?"

Xenia thought for a while, then said: "In January."

"Why not in December?" I asked.

"I cannot do it in December," she answered, almost tearfully, "but I promise to do it in January."

"But how about the money for Anastasia's trip?" I asked. "I have not succeeded in raising a cent, you know."

"I shall take care of that," Xenia answered, somewhat to my surprise, without offering any further explanation how her financial difficulties had been solved so suddenly.

"Very well," I said. "I shall consider our original agreement as once more binding, but only till January. If the Grand Duchess is not here in January I shall be forced to conclude that you have withdrawn from the case and start handling matters in my own way."

The Princess accepted my terms and we parted friendlier than we had met, yet coldly enough. Xenia's behaviour became steadily more puzzling to me. After all, nobody could force her to take any part in the case of Grand Duchess Anastasia, but if she wanted to help

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the Grand Duchess why then all these delays, why her constantly growing hostility towards me? Had she been a different kind of person, I should have begun to suspect her of having offered her help for the sole purpose of keeping me inactive, thus affording Anastasia's enemies complete freedom of action. But I could not picture so charming and lovable a person as Xenia in such a dubious rôle.

I assumed, therefore, that she was merely suffering from the proverbial Romanov vacillation and indecision. In all probability, she wanted to help Anastasia, but at the same time did not want to quarrel with her other relatives. Probably she was angry with me because I was pressing her for an immediate decision. She also seemed shocked at my temerity in making public accusations against members of Royalty.

That part of the Royal psychology I knew only too well. Among themselves members of Royalty did not hesitate to accuse one another of the worst possible crimes. But no commoner had, in their conviction, the right to show any disrespect to any of them, including their worst enemies. In what violent terms, for instance, had William II denounced his own uncle, Edward VII, to the Russian Emperor. Of what crimes had he not accused Edward and what names had he not called him, "the very Satan," being but one of them. Yet, when one of his own friends, a commoner, referred to that "very Satan" as "King Edward," Emperor William frowned and said "You probably mean *His Majesty* King Edward?"

Likewise Princess Xenia's frankness in telling me of some of the misdeeds of her Royal relatives was at

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times almost astonishing. But for me—a commoner—to criticise those same relatives of hers in the press was a totally different matter.

It was this Royal point of view, which I had to take into consideration, if only for the reason that in all probability Grand Duchess Anastasia herself shared it with all her relatives. But it was quite evident that some of the Royal personages intended to take full advantage of their traditional immunity from publicity in their persecution of Anastasia. And to convince them that they no longer possessed such immunity remained for the present my only real weapon with which I could defend the Grand Duchess.

Be that as it may, nothing did I want more than to serve as Xenia's support and loyal assistant, rather than be an added source of worry and unpleasantnesses, of which she, no doubt, had enough. And I sympathised with her the more, because it was, after all, through her desire to help Anastasia that she was exposing herself to all those troubles. But I certainly could not permit my sympathy for Xenia to leave Anastasia at the mercy of her enemies.

My article in the *Herald-Tribune* had, however, yet another—and this time unexpectedly pleasant—consequence. One evening I was surprised by a telephone call from the famous Russian composer and pianist, Sergei Vassilievich Rachmaninoff.

I had never known Mr. Rachmaninoff personally, but since my arrival in New York had heard a great deal about him. One of the very few Russians whom the Revolution had deprived neither of his position nor his wealth, he had become a sort of legendary fig-

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ure But while Americans are inclined to reward success with exaggerated, and often quite undeserved, respect, Russians have, on the contrary, the tendency of envying, and in consequence disliking, successful men

Also, I had never heard any Russian say a real kind word about Rachmaninoff He was said to be fabulously rich and earning from three to four hundred thousand dollars in a single season, yet refusing to help any of his unfortunate compatriots I had even been told that Mr Rachmaninoff was a rabid socialist and took delight in insulting the now impoverished aristocrats and monarchists

I suspected that, like most Russian stories, these denunciations of Rachmaninoff were exaggerated, but the assertion that he was a socialist was quite credible Indeed, one of his best friends, the equally famous Chaliapine, was an avowed Bolshevik; and, in general, the vast majority of Russian artists, writers, and musicians had always been noted for their revolutionary tendencies

I was therefore greatly surprised by Mr Rachmaninoff's telephone call, and my surprise increased when he told me that he had been deeply stirred by my article in the *Herald-Tribune*, and wondered whether I could come to his apartment for dinner

Needless to say, I accepted the invitation, and it was Mr Rachmaninoff himself who opened the door for me A strange sensation it was to have the door opened by the cover of the Prelude C sharp minor, suddenly come to life

A few minutes' conversation sufficed to convince me that all the stories about Mr Rachmaninoff were pure

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fabrications. He proved a kindly, benevolent man, very conservative in his political views, and altogether much more reminiscent of an old-time Russian bureaucrat than of the proverbial wild-eyed musical genius.

"Why have you never approached me on the case of Mrs. Tschaikovsky?" he asked me in a gently reproachful manner. "I shall be very frank with you and tell you right now, that I am by no means convinced that she is actually Grand Duchess Anastasia. Hers seems to be one of those stories which are too fantastic to be believed, yet require even more fantastic explanations to be disbelieved. But I am convinced that she is no deliberate impostor, and I am further convinced that you are quite sincere in your belief in her. I want to be of help."

"Whosoever she is," Mrs. Rachmaninoff added, "there can be little doubt that she is the innocent victim of some dreadful intrigue, and has suffered more than it seems possible for any human being to suffer. We have to help her."

I then began to regret that I had not approached the Rachmaninoffs from the very beginning, but as I explained to them presently, I had had not the slightest reason for doing so.

We spent the whole evening discussing the Grand Duchess's experiences and present circumstances, and finally Mr. Rachmaninoff said:

"I am willing to pay for Anastasia's trip to this country, right now. But as long as Xenia promises definitely to bring her over in January I think it will be better to wait until then. Aside from anything else, if Mrs. Tschaikovsky is indeed Anastasia, it will be

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much better for her to be brought to this country by her own cousin. One thing I can do is to get in touch with Xenia and offer her my help. That may stir her up."

And so he did; and indeed Xenia's attitude seemed to have changed once more and she started with the preparations for Anastasia's journey in good earnest. Finally, she informed me that everything was ready and she was about to dispatch a trusted nurse, Miss Agnes Gallacher, to Germany.

"The only thing which worries me," she observed, "is that Anastasia is said to speak no language except German, and Miss Gallacher does not know a word of any language except English, which she speaks with a strong Scotch accent. How on earth are the two going to understand each other?"

"You forget," I said, "that Grand Duchess Anastasia always spoke fluent English."

"But she doesn't any more," Xenia retorted.

"True," I agreed. "But it is my conviction that her refusal to speak English, like her refusal to speak Russian, is but some kind of neurosis. I am positive that she has not forgotten either English or Russian; and here is an excellent opportunity to test that conviction of mine. I venture to predict that, if left alone with a person who knows no other language than English, Anastasia will immediately begin to speak English herself."

"I am not so sure of that," Xenia sighed. "But if you want to take the responsibility, I am going to send Miss Gallacher for her."

"By all means, send Miss Gallacher," I answered.

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Even so, with further unforeseen delays, it was not in January but in early February that Grand Duchess Anastasia finally arrived in the United States. That, however, I did not mind. What I did mind was that shortly before Anastasia's expected arrival Mrs. Derfelden informed me that Xenia was leaving for the West Indies and would not return in time to meet Anastasia.

"But why has she got to leave now?" I enquired.

"She needs a rest," Mrs. Derfelden said cryptically.

"A funny time for her to find herself suddenly in need of rest," I observed. "But who is going to meet the Grand Duchess and where is she going to stay until Xenia's return?"

"Xenia wants you to meet Anastasia and will give you a sworn affidavit, stating that you are empowered to act as her representative in all the affairs concerning Grand Duchess Anastasia," Mrs. Derfelden said. "You should have no trouble, because Xenia has arranged everything with the Immigration authorities. But she told me to warn you again that if you permit a single word about Anastasia's arrival to get into the newspapers she will withdraw from the case. Otherwise, she will do as she has promised, and on her next trip to Europe she will take Anastasia to the Empress Dowager. And until Xenia's return, Anastasia will stay in the city with Miss Annie B. Jennings."

I had never met Miss Jennings, but I knew that she was a wealthy spinster, whose brother's estate in Cold Spring Harbor adjoined the Leeds' place in Oyster Bay. Moreover, Mrs. Derfelden's daughter, Marie,

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was married to Miss Jennings' nephew, Hugh D. Auchincloss.

It was again one of those bewildering situations, which only members of Royalty were capable of creating. Xenia's sudden departure for the West Indies bore every appearance of a flight. It placed me in the most embarrassing position, after having assured Grand Duchess Anastasia that she was coming to this country as a guest of her cousin, to take her upon her arrival to the house of a complete stranger. Having heard so much about Anastasia's suspiciousness, and experienced some of it myself, I was not a little worried how she would react to such a situation.

Once more, with any other person than Xenia, I should have suspected treason. But Xenia, I was sure, was not capable of treason. Moreover, she could not have wanted to betray me and at the same time make me her official representative. That, by the way, was another paradoxical situation. The unfriendly attitude which Mrs. Derfelden had assumed towards me of late seemed to indicate that Xenia herself no longer trusted me. Indeed, I had heard from many sides that Mrs. Derfelden was now accusing me of having simply staged a grand publicity stunt. And if such was her opinion, in all probability shared by Xenia, what a peculiar notion it was to make me Xenia's representative.

But after all, the main thing was that in a few days *Grand Duchess Anastasia* would reach the safety of the hospitable American shore, and my own problem now was not to try to understand the mental processes of either Xenia or Mrs. Derfelden, but make certain that

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no trouble would arise at the time of Anastasia's arrival. The thing I dreaded most was some trouble with the Immigration authorities. With her phobia in regard to all questioning, I could not quite imagine Grand Duchess Anastasia standing in a crowd of passengers and answering questions fired at her by Immigration Inspectors.

It was also important to take the Grand Duchess off the boat as quickly as possible, before newspaper reporters would have the time to discover her.

Luckily, several friends came to my aid. Mrs. Hetty Richard promised to come with her car and drive Anastasia from the pier to Miss Jennings' house. Mr. Cadwallader W. Kelsey, or Carl, as his friends called him for short, volunteered to take care of Anastasia's luggage. And Mr. Rachmaninoff asked his manager, Mr. Foley, to go with me on board the *Berengaria*, on which the Grand Duchess was a passenger, and help me in case of any difficulties with the Immigration authorities.

The *Berengaria* was scheduled to arrive on February 7. On February 6, armed with Xenia's affidavit, I went to the city to obtain a permit to go out to the ship on the Government cutter. Contrary, however, to Mrs. Derfelden's assurances, I discovered that nobody knew anything at all about Anastasia's arrival—nobody, that is, except the only people whom Xenia did not want to know about it—the newspaper reporters. Indeed, it was only through the help of a representative of the *New York Times*, that I obtained at last the permit to board the Government cutter. But on the same evening every newspaper in New York carried a long

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story about the arrival of the "mysterious Mrs. Tschai-kovsky."

"Three cheers for Xenia," I reflected.

On February 7, I went at the appointed hour on board the cutter, but found on it only two passengers, Mr. Foley and Mrs. Fritz Kreisler, chatting amiably.

"The fog is so thick that the cutter must wait for it to lift," Mr. Foley explained.

"More of Anastasia's good luck," I observed.

It was. We waited till 7 o'clock in the evening and were finally told to come on the following morning. I could well imagine how nervous the poor Grand Duchess was probably getting on the fog-bound *Berengaria*. From what the Leuchtenbergs had told me about her, she was quite capable of deciding, that it was because of her presence on board that the *Berengaria* was not allowed to approach the pier.

On the following morning, the fog remained just as thick, but the Government cutter decided to proceed. Now it had many passengers—some thirty-odd reporters among them. The petty officer in charge of the boat called Mr. Foley and me into his cabin, but the newspaper reporters discovered us quickly and one of them walked right in and seized me by the shoulder. Mr. Foley was about to intervene but I recognized in the reporter my good acquaintance, Dudley Nichols of the *New York World*.

"For goodness's sake, don't ask me anything," I begged Nichols. "I have taken the vow of silence and won't talk. As for Grand Duchess Anastasia herself, she is sick and afraid of people. Can't you be kind for once, and let her leave the ship without bothering her?"

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"I could, perhaps," Nichols said. "But look at that crowd," pointing to the other reporters. "You won't be able to escape them!"

"Tell them that they will be only wasting their time," I said to Nichols. "There will be no interview, no matter what they do."

Nichols shook his head doubtfully and went back to join his colleagues. The cutter proceeded at a snail's pace, until the hulk of the *Berengaria* suddenly appeared out of the milky fog, right in front of us.

Somehow Foley and I managed to get on the rope ladder together with the Immigration Inspectors and ahead of the reporters. Having scrambled on board, we ran towards Anastasia's suite and reached it just in time. No sooner did we lock the door behind us than we heard all the thirty-odd reporters assemble outside.

It was a rather precipitate entry on our part and, attracted by the noise, Grand Duchess Anastasia came out of her bedroom, a frightened expression on her face. But the moment she saw me, she smiled cheerfully and gave me her hand to kiss.

I hardly dared to believe my eyes. Here she was at last—"the Little One"—looking much better than she had in Seon, wearing a new and quite becoming dress, and obviously very pleased to see me.

"I must ask Your Imperial Highness' forgiveness for dashing into the room like this," I apologised. "But we were pursued by newspaper reporters."

"Newspaper reporters? How terrible," the Grand Duchess said. "But you will not let them in?"

"No, we will not let them in," I assured her, "but it

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will be rather a problem to get Your Imperial Highness off the boat. We shall, however, try our best."

I then introduced Mr. Foley, and much to my delight the Grand Duchess greeted him in English. Soon we were joined by Miss Agnes Gallacher, whom I now saw for the first time. She proved a truly delightful Scotchwoman, and at the first opportunity I took her aside to ask when Anastasia had begun to speak English.

"The moment I was introduced to her," Miss Gallacher said. "Who started that story that she can't speak English? She speaks it so well—it is obvious she has known it since childhood. And I also want to tell you that anybody who suspects her of being an impostor must be crazy. Believe me, I know people. Have seen plenty of them. She is every inch a lady and a princess. But also such a child. She cannot conceal a single one of her thoughts, let alone play the rôle of another. In those few days I came to love her, as I have seldom loved anyone."

In the meantime, our friends the thirty-odd reporters were getting noisier and noisier, and I went out in the hope of being able to calm them. But my appearance started a veritable pandemonium. I was surrounded on all sides and showered with questions and demands to permit "Mrs. Tschaiovsky" to be interviewed.

"I am sorry," I said, trying to make myself heard above the din. "But there will be no interview. The Grand Duchess is very tired, and I hope that you will be decent enough to leave her alone."

I was answered with loud exclamations of protest.

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The representatives of the tabloid press were particularly noisy and offensive.

"You have a duty towards our readers!" one of them yelled. "You can't refuse an interview!"

"What's all this secrecy?" a fat little Jew shouted, gesticulating wildly. "She must be an impostor, if you are afraid to show her to us!"

"Sorry," I repeated. "But I cannot permit you to see the Grand Duchess, nor say anything myself. I know how you feel about it, but I am here only as the representative of Princess Xenia and I am not allowed to talk."

But the protests and demands grew only louder, and, seeing that all reasoning was useless, I returned to Anastasia's suite to discuss with Mr. Foley the question that worried me most at the moment, how we could manage the questioning of the Grand Duchess by the Immigration Inspectors.

"I shall see what I can do," Mr. Foley said. "By the way, do not worry about her admission. Mr. Rachmaninoff has authorized me to deposit whatever bond may be required, should any trouble arise."

Mr. Foley disappeared, while I began to prepare the Grand Duchess as best I could for the unavoidable questioning. As I had feared, Anastasia became quite nervous, thus increasing my apprehensions further. I was still trying to calm her, when Mr. Foley reappeared with an Immigration Inspector. The latter took Anastasia's papers and proceeded to question her somewhat as follows:

"Your name is Mrs. Anastasia Tschaikovsky? Yes, it is. You came to this country as a tourist, for a six

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months' stay? Yes, you did. Your papers are in order? So they are. You are a guest of Mrs. William B. Leeds of Oyster Bay? That's right. Admitted!"

And, with the last word, he affixed his stamp to Anastasia's certificate, while the Grand Duchess, who herself had not uttered a word, kept looking at him with a puzzled smile.

At that moment a fat doctor appeared, but before he had the time to open his mouth the Inspector pushed him gently out of the room.

"It's all right, Doctor," I heard him say in the corridor. "Her health is perfect. I have already admitted her."

"What was all this?" the Grand Duchess asked in the tone of a curious child, leaning her head to one side.

"It was the questioning I have been warning Your Imperial Highness about," I laughed.

"But I did not say a word," she protested, puzzled.

"And you will not have to," I said.

"Oh, that was very nice," she said with a sigh of relief.

It was nice! I could have kissed that wonderful Inspector on both cheeks.

"What sort of miracle have you performed?" I asked Mr. Foley, for I was quite as bewildered as the Grand Duchess.

"I've done exactly nothing," Mr. Foley answered with a smile as happy as my own. "You don't imagine that one could bribe those men? I simply told him who the lady was. He said that he had read about her and deeply sympathised with her. The only miracle

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involved is that there are such extremely decent people in this world."

"Admitted! Yes, 'the Little One' was admitted," I repeated to myself again and again. What a relief it was!

All that remained now was to take her ashore. But here it was that a disappointment awaited us. Word came from the Captain that the fog was so dense, that the *Berengaria* would not attempt to approach the pier for quite some time, probably not for another twenty-four hours.

It proved a rather mad day for Mr. Foley and myself. The reporters did not relax their vigilance, and we could not leave Anastasia's suite without being immediately surrounded by them. They stood around us while we ate our luncheon, they walked after us wherever we went, they hung around Anastasia's door, hoping to slip through unobserved, so that eventually we had to establish a watch, which Miss Gallacher, Mr. Foley, and I kept in turn.

In the evening several photographers placed themselves at the door of the ladies' bathroom and proceeded to photograph every woman who entered or left it. Inasmuch as many of them were in different stages of undress, the Captain received several complaints, but even that did not help.

"What are you doing all this nonsense for?" I asked one of the photographers. "Why are you taking the photograph of every woman going to the bathroom?"

"Because sooner or later your Grand Duchess will have to go to the bathroom also," he explained. "And

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by photographing every lady we are certain to get a picture of her."

"Very clever," I laughed. "Except that the Grand Duchess happens to have a private bathroom."

He looked at me, stupefied and said: "Gosh! We haven't thought of that!"

After a while Dudley Nichols offered me to conclude a gentlemen's agreement. He would go home and take most of the reporters away with him, provided I promise to give no interview to those who would choose to remain. I promised, of course, and all reporters, except a few tabloidians actually left, much to my relief.

With the necessity of constantly watching the reporters, I had not been able to see much of the Grand Duchess herself, that day. Besides, the excitement of the morning had tired her a great deal. Also, as I had feared, she was quite puzzled and not at all pleased by the absence of Xenia and the news that she would have to stay at first in the house of some American woman she had never heard about. She spent, therefore, the greater part of the day resting in her bedroom.

But I did have several long discussions with Miss Gallacher, and was delighted to discover that she had fallen completely under Anastasia's spell. She also impressed me as a highly competent and a kindly and jovial woman. Certainly Princess Xenia could not have chosen a better companion for Anastasia, and I felt that Miss Gallacher's presence—for she was to remain with Anastasia until Xenia's return—would help the Grand Duchess a great deal in adjusting herself to her new surroundings.

When night came, the Captain of the ship very oblig-

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ingly placed two staterooms at Mr. Foley's and my disposal, but even so we could not sleep much. Then again, we had no razors with us, so that in the morning we both looked none too respectable—our eyes red from lack of sleep and our faces unshaved.

But the weather had changed and the sun shone brightly. Shortly after breakfast the *Berengaria* at last reached the pier, and the time came to take the Grand Duchess off the boat. All our arguments with reporters and photographers who had returned in the morning proved of no avail. I tried my best to prepare Anastasia for the ordeal. Miss Gallacher placed herself at the head of our small procession, while Mr. Foley and I flanked the Grand Duchess on both sides. But no sooner did we walk out into the corridor than one of the tabloid reporters sneaked up from behind and tried to seize Anastasia by the shoulder.

"Hey, listen!" he shouted at her. "Aren't you going to say anything to us? Are you a Grand Duchess or an impostor?"

I saw how the poor Anastasia began to tremble. Mr. Foley, who so far had displayed amazing patience, lost his temper, and, seizing the reporter by the collar, sent him flying along the corridor. Another reporter started shouting at Foley that he would have him arrested for assault and battery.

"I'm a witness! I'm a witness!" he kept screaming, but at the same time remaining wisely at a considerable distance from Foley.

The moment we walked out on deck we were surrounded by photographers, who, in spite of the broad daylight, began to explode their flashlights right into

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our faces. I shuddered to think what dreadful memories that shooting evoked in the Grand Duchess. Probably those men did not realise the inexcusable cruelty they were committing. Even so, I would have gladly tossed them all overboard.

Down on the pier we hastened towards the freight elevator, at the foot of which Mrs. Richard had placed her car. The ruse worked and a few minutes later we had safely lost ourselves in the traffic. But the damage had already been done. Poor Little One! She continued to tremble from head to foot and stare in the distance with glassy, moist eyes, muttering under her breath:

"How terrible . . . how terrible . . ."

We reached Miss Jennings' house on Park Avenue in the upper thirties, without further misadventures, and were at once taken to the upper floor, where two rooms had been prepared for the Grand Duchess and Miss Gallacher. I helped Anastasia to take off her coat, but my efforts to calm her proved vain. She remained standing in the middle of the room, still trembling, still muttering: "How terrible . . . how terrible . . ."

A moment later appeared Mrs. Derfelden. So hostile had her attitude towards me become that I was prepared for the worst. And, indeed, it was with a rather cynical smile that she entered the room. But never had I seen anybody's facial expression change so swiftly as Mrs. Derfelden's did the moment she saw Grand Duchess Anastasia. Her eyes filled with tears, her face turned ashen grey. She hesitated for a moment—the very picture of a person suddenly confronted

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with an apparition from the Beyond. Then she ran towards Anastasia, seized both her hands and began to cover them with kisses, repeating, or rather sobbing:

"Your Imperial Highness . . . Your Imperial Highness . . ."

For that one moment I forgave her all the unpleasantness she had caused me.

Shortly afterwards appeared Miss Jennings, who was an elderly lady, typical of her kind. The introductions over, I suggested that the Grand Duchess be allowed complete rest, and in this Miss Gallacher supported me firmly. I obtained Anastasia's permission to call on her the day after next, then took leave of her, and went to thank Mr. Foley and Mr. Kelsey for their invaluable help.

Mr. Kelsey, who invited me to luncheon, told me the story—at once comical and touching—of his efforts to smuggle in some little plant, which Anastasia had brought with her from Europe. It was just an ordinary little flower, but Anastasia was much attached to it and, besides, was anxious to preserve the soil of Europe which filled the flower pot. There was some quarantine against European plants and to get that flower off the boat proved almost more difficult than the Grand Duchess herself. But the good Carl Kelsey had finally succeeded in his efforts, and much to his satisfaction Anastasia's plant with its precious European soil was now right in her room.

I felt as if I had returned to New York after a long journey, and hastened to buy several newspapers. Every one of them carried a front page story about the Grand Duchess' arrival. The accounts ranged from

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profound sympathy to vulgar mockery. For some reason it was poor Mr. Foley—"the mysterious Foley" as they all called him—on whom the newspaper reporters vented their anger at their failure to obtain an interview with the Grand Duchess. I was treated with surprising leniency, and the *Herald-Tribune* had even printed a touching editorial on the beauty of the loyalty displayed by Anastasia's friends on the day of her arrival.

But the newspapers contained also two important communications from Europe. One was that Grand Duke Andrew had met "Mrs. Tschaikovsky" in Paris and formally acknowledged her as Grand Duchess Anastasia. I thanked him heartily in my thoughts and only regretted that I could not send him at once \$4,000 that was so urgently needed.

But the other communication was so bewildering, that I had to read it over several times to make sure that I was not imagining things. It was a cable from Grand Duke Alexander, informing the *New York Times* that the whole case of "Mrs. Tschaikovsky" was a conspiracy, organised by me in an effort to gain control of the fortune which his wife, Grand Duchess Xenia, was trying to inherit in England!

So far both Grand Duchesses, Xenia and Olga, had stubbornly denied the very existence of such a fortune. More than that, Grand Duchess Xenia had stated repeatedly that, even had such a fortune existed, she would never attempt to obtain it because she could do so only through litigation, and she considered all litigation as entirely beneath the dignity of a Grand Duchess.

And now Xenia's own husband was officially an-

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nouncing to the world that she was trying to inherit a fortune in England! Better still, he virtually admitted that the fortune should properly belong to Grand Duchess Anastasia, once my attempts to prove that Mrs. Tschaikovsky was Anastasia threatened to make it impossible for Xenia to inherit it.

Tired and upset as I was, I nevertheless could not help bursting out into laughter.

"Good old Grand Duke Alexander," I said to Carl Kelsey. "This certainly is letting the cat out of the bag!"

VII

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THE public interest aroused by the arrival of Grand Duchess Anastasia was extraordinary. As I think of it now, then was the time to deliver the major battle to the enemies of the Grand Duchess and win; win—I am inclined to think—an easy victory.

The financial offers alone were astonishing. I personally was swamped with requests for articles about the Grand Duchess, the payments offered reaching as high a figure as \$30,000 for a single series. Thus I had every opportunity not only to create a public opinion favourable to Anastasia, but also to accumulate ample funds for both her personal maintenance and the financing of the necessary litigations.

But I failed to avail myself of that extremely favourable situation and in consequence cannot escape the blame for the fact that the Grand Duchess has not been reinstated in her rights to this day. By way, not of justification, but explanation I must say, however, that at the time a number of factors made it virtually impossible for me to perceive the right course.

First and above all, there was the attitude of Grand Duchess Anastasia herself. In those days she still hoped that her relatives would eventually come to their senses and acknowledge her of their own free will. I had not as yet discussed the matter with her

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personally, but I knew from Mrs. von Rathlef, the Leuchtenbergs and others, that Anastasia thought of her recognition in terms of her return into the fold of her own family.

Continually she complained of being forced to live among strangers. Again and again, especially when ill and delirious, she spoke of her relatives, pleaded to be taken to her grandmother, called for her aunts, begged that her German uncle—that same wretched Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt who was so ruthlessly persecuting her—be induced to come to her. By contrast, considerations such as the attitude towards her of the public in general, financial security, personal safety, hardly existed for her at all.

In short, it was the affection and companionship of her own kin that she craved; and at the time I thought that a victory in a court of law could not be counted upon to give her those. Later I had changed my mind even on that subject. Having learned the full extent of the greed, the petty snobbishness and respect for empty titles predominant in Royal circles, I came to believe that, legally acknowledged as a Grand Duchess and given her fortune, Anastasia would instantly become a cherished and much respected member of Royalty. But in those days I feared that a legal victory alone would prove rather hollow, by antagonizing Anastasia's relatives to such an extent as to make her return into the ranks of her family forever impossible.

In that latter point of view I was more than upheld by Mrs. Derfelden who, in her turn, continued to act merely as the mouthpiece of Princess Xenia.

Never would the sundry Royal families accept a

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verdict of a court of law rendered against their wishes, she assured me. Yes, through the courts Anastasia could, no doubt, receive the passport of a Russian Grand Duchess and gain possession of her inheritance, but not that personal recognition by her relatives which she wanted above everything else.

And such recognition could be obtained—and Princess Xenia had promised to obtain it—by the simple method of taking the Grand Duchess into the presence of her grandmother, the Empress Dowager. Thus, there was no need of thinking of any litigations and hence of attempting to either earn or raise the money for Anastasia's legal expenses. As for her personal expenses, had not Xenia promised to support her for life, if necessary? And naturally the moment Anastasia was acknowledged by the Empress Dowager, she would be automatically reinstated in all her rights and become more than independent financially.

Under the circumstances what right did I have to endanger Anastasia's recognition by giving her case further publicity? Not only would that publicity alienate Princess Xenia and, according to her, all the other members of Royalty, but it would also deprive my own testimony in regard to Anastasia's identity of all value. For the present even Mrs. Derfelden was forced to admit that I could no longer be accused of any ulterior motive in my championship of Anastasia's cause. But were I to accept the money—enormous money for a penniless man—offered me for articles on Anastasia, I should only convince everybody that all the accusations against me were correct and, in conse-

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quence, that my recognition of Anastasia was not necessarily based on any real conviction.

Thus I allowed myself to be completely duped; and in later years my only, if somewhat feeble, consolation remained the fact that it was precisely my determination to stop at no sacrifice in my struggle for the Grand Duchess's complete rehabilitation which led me into the error. It was unfortunate for Anastasia that the policy I ought to have pursued happened to be also the most advantageous one to me personally; and I had been trained since earliest childhood to beware especially of that form of self-deception which leads one to choose, as the best, such course of action which is likely to result in some personal advantage.

Be that as it may, I not only rejected all the offers for publishing a complete account of Grand Duchess Anastasia's case, but for days had to play a rather nerve-racking game of hide and seek with the various representatives of the press. Their persistence was truly astonishing. They camped around my house for several days, knocking at my door at regular intervals till late in the night. They continually called me up on the telephone. They even approached my wife telling her of all the money I could make and advising her to demand of me that I avail myself of such an opportunity. For a long time thereafter my children played "Reporters" instead of Indians.

It also happened that a few reporters did catch sight of Mrs. Richard's automobile, at the moment when we were driving away from the pier, and took down the license number. At first they made a mistake and traced the number to some Jewish resident of the

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Bronx. One newspaper contained an extremely funny account of the assault by reporters on the house of that poor Jew and his bewildered protestations that never in his life had he dealt in any way with Russian Grand Duchesses.

But later the error was duly discovered and the reporters descended in force on the Richard's place in Hewlett. One of the newspaper men went so far as to disguise himself as a police lieutenant and appear at the Richard's door with a faked warrant for the search of their house. Mr. Richard, who on the day of Anastasia's arrival happened to be in Boston, was not a little bewildered when on his way back to New York he learned from newspapers of the strange doings at his house in Hewlett. So worried was he that he did not go home but sought the sanctuary of the Harvard Club.

Naturally, the reporters also kept close watch on the Leeds' estate in Oyster Bay, and some of them had apparently begun to "see things," for one newspaper carried an account about a special guard of Russian monarchists blocking all approaches to the place. It even printed a drawing showing a fancy gate, which had never existed on the Leeds' estate, surrounded by those strange people who are traditionally meant to represent Russians in American illustrations, wearing peculiar caps and carrying rifles with long bayonets.

One place the reporters never thought of approaching was Miss Jennings' house on Park Avenue. It took all sorts of stratagems on my part to slip out of my house unobserved, so as not to be followed to Anastasia's retreat. After a while the situation became

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really quite amusing and luckily the Grand Duchess herself began to view it as such.

On my first visit to her I saw with relief that Anastasia had quite recovered from the shock of her first encounter with the American press. She looked again quite cheerful and told me that she liked both Miss Jennings and her house.

"It is a comfortable house and there are many nice things here," she said, "although there are also a lot of things which are lacking in good taste."

The Grand Duchess was quite right. Miss Jennings' house was a perfect replica of the habitats of rich Moscow merchants who used to buy indiscriminately objects of real value and others almost worthless, eager above all to fill their rooms with an astonishing quantity of things, thus impressing visitors with their wealth.

"And you know, I have already made a very funny discovery," Anastasia said, her blue eyes lighting with mischief.

"What discovery?" I wondered.

"Miss Jennings has quite a few paintings and seems very proud of them," the Grand Duchess said. "She showed them all to me, but later I discovered by myself a painting which she had not shown or even mentioned, hanging in a dark corridor above a big wardrobe. And you know what painting it is? Mona Lisa!"

"Mona Lisa?" I repeated, astonished. "A copy of Mona Lisa, you mean?"

"Ah, that is just it," Anastasia began to laugh. "It is such an excellent copy that at first glance I was almost deceived by it. But I brought a chair and climbed on

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it and, having examined the painting very carefully, discovered that it was undoubtedly a copy, but a very, very good one. But don't you understand what it means?"

I could see that the Grand Duchess saw some grand joke in the matter, but was quite unable to guess what it was.

"But don't you remember how sometime before the war Mona Lisa had mysteriously disappeared from the Louvre?" Anastasia asked. "The police searched for it all over the world but never found it. Then Mona Lisa reappeared as mysteriously as it had vanished. *But in the meantime some half dozen excellent copies* had been sold for fabulous prices. Don't you understand now that I must have discovered one of those famous copies?"

"But are you sure the one you have discovered here is not the original?" I asked.

"Oh, I am sure," Anastasia laughed. "But it is the kind of copy which could easily deceive a person who does not know much about painting."

"To tell the truth, I never knew Your Imperial Highness was such a good art expert," I said.

"I shouldn't say that I am an expert," Anastasia laughed again. "But I always loved paintings and we had so many of them. I really know art quite well. Besides, I have a flair. I can always tell a copy from an original."

And this, I reflected once more, was the woman whom her friends pictured as a pathetic invalid with an impaired memory, and her enemies as a Polish peasant. The Grand Duchess's memory, I was begin-

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ning to think, was decidedly better than my own. I myself had only a very dim recollection of the circumstances of Mona Lisa's disappearance from the Louvre. Nor did she seem to have lost any of her former mental keenness. I could have seen that Mona Lisa in Miss Jennings' corridor any number of times, without arriving in so logical a fashion at Anastasia's deductions.

After a while the Grand Duchess, to my delight, expressed the wish to go to the movies. But before we left the house Anastasia looked at me with a critical eye and said regretfully:

"I wish you had a uniform. You would look so nice in a uniform. It is terrible that nobody wears uniforms any more. And why aren't you using perfume? Your father always used so much of it."

"I wish I could," I said. "But in this country men are not supposed to use perfume."

"How silly!" Anastasia said. "I love perfume. Take some of mine."

"I assure Your Imperial Highness that it isn't done in this country," I laughed. "And if I come to the movies perfumed, Heaven knows what people will think of me."

But Anastasia seized her bottle of perfume and spilled it all over me.

"There!" she exclaimed triumphantly. "Now you *are* perfumed! If I want you to use perfume, what do you care what other people may think? And please do not call me 'Imperial Highness.' I am no longer an Imperial Highness. Don't you know that I am just a plain Mrs. Tschaikovsky? You have to call me 'Mrs. Tschaikovsky.'"

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"Your Imperial Highness can kill me, but I certainly will not call you by any such silly name," I said.

"But why not?" she asked, trying to appear annoyed, but unable to conceal a pleased glitter in her eyes. "I have been married to Tschaikovsky and am, therefore, Mrs. Tschaikovsky."

"Your aunt, Grand Duchess Olga, is married to a Mr. Kulikovsky, but nobody calls her 'Mrs. Kulikovsky,'" I said. "And your cousin, Grand Duchess Marie, was married to Prince Poutiatin, but nobody calls her 'Princess Poutiatin.' And if they remain Grand Duchesses, in spite of their marriages, Your Imperial Highness remains one also."

Anastasia leaned her head to one side, just as she always did when arguing with me in the days of her childhood, and observed:

"You are obstinate, aren't you? Well, I too am obstinate. You may *not* call me 'Imperial Highness.' You didn't call me 'Imperial Highness' when we were children. What did you call me then?"

"At first I did call you 'Imperial Highness,'" I said, "and then you forbade it to me, just as you are doing now. Afterwards I called you 'Anastasia Nikolaevna,' but to tell you the truth, I thought of you mostly as 'the Little One.'"

"You did?" she laughed. "Well, suppose, you call me again 'Anastasia Nikolaevna.'"

In the movies I found myself quite unable to look at the screen. It remained difficult enough for me to grasp fully the fact that Anastasia—"the Little One"—was alive, had never been dead, belonged wholly to the normal, everyday world. Still, it was somehow easier

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to comprehend the fact as long as she remained in the fantastic surroundings of Castle Secon or even in Miss Jennings' weird house on Park Avenue. But to be sitting at Anastasia's side in that epitome of modern New York—a Broadway movie theatre—was simply incredible.

But equally wonderful it was that Anastasia, in spite of all her experiences and the never ending tragedy of her persecution by her own family, was yet so completely normal and human a person as to be able to sit in a movie and watch with interest some silly picture. And so, while she kept looking at the picture, I kept looking at her, as if unconsciously afraid that she might suddenly dissolve in thin air, like a ghost.

But she did not dissolve and soon began to smile in her usual amused and childishly mischievous manner. Then, without turning her head, she whispered:

"Can't you at least pretend that you are looking at the screen?"

"It is very difficult," I confessed.

"But you must try," she laughed.

On our way home I pointed out to the Grand Duchess the various newspaper buildings in the vicinity of Times Square. Again she began to laugh like a happy child.

"Think of all those poor reporters watching your house in Hempstead, the Leeds' place in Oyster Bay and the Richard's house in Hewlett, while you and I are walking peacefully past their own offices in New York," she said.

"That is just what I am thinking of," I answered. "I must say that I am enough of a newspaper man my-

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self to feel sorry for them. "And I am rather astonished that they let you slip through their fingers so easily."

"They were not so terribly clever, after all," Anastasia smiled.

The Grand Duchess's good mood, in the course of those first days in New York, led me to commit a rather bad blunder. I knew that Mr. Rachmaninoff was very eager to see Anastasia, and I, myself, was equally eager to have him see her. But being, in spite of his fame, as shy as a child, Mr. Rachmaninoff was very much afraid of calling at the house of a complete stranger—Miss Jennings. Even so, I hoped that the matter could be arranged, the more so that Anastasia had been very favourably impressed by Mr. Foley and mentioned several times how grateful she was to him for having been of such help on the day of her arrival.

But when I asked the Grand Duchess whether she would receive Rachmaninoff himself, she became very much displeased.

"Why should I receive him? I do not want to receive him," she said irritably.

Astonished, I began to argue that if she felt grateful to Mr. Foley she should really feel much more grateful to Mr. Rachmaninoff, for it was at the latter's request that Mr. Foley had met her on the boat. I also told her that Rachmaninoff would be a most valuable friend to her, and finally that he was a charming and kindly man, sincerely eager to be of help:

"*How can he be such a good man?*" Anastasia suddenly flared up, "when he is rich and happy and living in safety abroad, while his Emperor has perished? Where was he with all his goodness when the revolu-

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tion began? Or did he not consider himself bound by his oath to serve his Emperor faithfully and die for him if necessary?"

It was the first time that I saw Anastasia in such a mood. She was no longer "the Little One," but an indignant and imperious Grand Duchess.

To an outsider Anastasia's attitude towards Rachmaninoff would have appeared preposterous, but to me it did not. I myself had been brought up with the same uncompromising, essentially mystical, conception of a subject's duty towards his Sovereign which Anastasia now stated. It was characteristic that she spoke of a Russian's duty not towards herself, or any other member of her family, but only towards her father, the Emperor. For, indeed, it was to the Emperor, and the Emperor alone, that a subject was bound by his oath. Even the Empress and the Heir to the Throne were but subjects of the Emperor. To abandon the Emperor's family could be regarded as despicable, but not as treasonable. To abandon the Emperor was legally treason.

But why such outburst precisely against Rachmaninoff, I wondered. Anastasia had never known him. He had always been a free artist. His guilt towards the Emperor, if any, was so much less apparent than that of the thousands of military officers and bureaucrats who constituted the majority of Russian refugees. Yet, had not Anastasia herself talked to me in Secon of those refugees, with such touching solicitude?

It seemed to me that the answer lay in Anastasia's own comment on Rachmaninoff as one who was "rich and happy and living in safety abroad." Most Russians

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had reached the safety of foreign lands only after years of incredible suffering and misadventures. Their own escapes having been but happy accidents, one could allow them the benefit of the doubt: perhaps they had tried to do something for their Emperor, but failed, or simply had not been in a position to do anything for him.

Moreover, those of them who were obviously guilty of treason had been punished severely by fate itself and now led the lives of miserable outcasts. To Anastasia, who had so evidently inherited her father's paternalistic attitude towards the Russian people, those wretched refugees were probably like children whose disobedience had automatically inflicted upon them a punishment so great as to change the parental anger to pity and sympathy.

But Rachmaninoff's case appeared different. He had left Russia without any trouble and now was enjoying greater fame and riches than ever before. It was that latter circumstance which apparently made Anastasia so angry with him. He, in her opinion, had no excuse to offer for his failure to come to his Emperor's aid, nor had fate punished him in any way for what she regarded as disloyalty to his Emperor.

And I knew that I would never be able to explain to her that men like Rachmaninoff, even if they had to give their oath of allegiance, had done so simply in compliance with a formality which meant nothing to them; that having never been in Government service they had not regarded themselves, nor had been regarded by others, as having any special duty towards their Sovereign. To Anastasia an oath was an oath,

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and a man—be he a chamberlain or a saxophone player—who had sworn his allegiance to the Emperor but done nothing to rescue him from his enemies was guilty of treason.

Even so, I continued to argue with the Grand Duchess until she finally allowed me—without, however, concealing her displeasure—to bring Mr. Rachmaninoff into her presence at a certain day and hour.

Delighted, I hurried to Mr. Rachmaninoff, but had to argue with him also, for much as he wanted to see the Grand Duchess, he still felt nervous about going to Miss Jennings' house. I assured him, however, that Miss Jennings would undoubtedly be only too happy to see him, and he finally let himself become persuaded.

Then everything went wrong. In the entrance hall we were met by Miss Jennings who must have forgotten Rachmaninoff's proposed visit and, with a gesture characteristic of rich New Yorkers, pointed at him with her finger and asked:

"Who is this man?"

"But, Miss Jennings, this is Mr. Rachmaninoff," I hastened to explain.

But my introduction produced not the slightest effect, possibly for the reason that, thoughtlessly enough, I had pronounced the name "Rachmaninoff" in the Russian, not the American, way.

"As long as you know him it's all right," was Miss Jennings' only comment.

I hardly dared to look at poor Rachmaninoff who pressed himself to the wall as if hoping that it would give way and thus permit him to escape. But worse was to come. When I announced Mr. Rachmaninoff

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to the Grand Duchess she looked at me angrily and said.

"Very well Bring him in"

And when I did bring him in I found that in the intervening minutes Anastasia had lain down on her bed and covered herself up to her nose with blankets

Mr Rachmaninoff approached her bed, but she looked at him without uttering a word, her eyes full of tears All three of us froze in utter embarrassment, but I think that I felt worse than anybody else, being wholly responsible for that painful scene After a few minutes of unendurable silence Rachmaninoff tip toed out of the room

I felt well nigh desperate, for I had no more hope of ever again luring Rachmaninoff into the Grand Duchess's presence Luckily, however, he accepted the whole incident in a most charitable spirit and there after appeared even more eager to help me than he had been before The reason for the latter fact might have been that Anastasia's adherents were constantly being accused of hiding her from prominent Russians, supposedly in the fear that the latter would at once know her to be an impostor I had at least convinced Mr Rachmaninoff that, far from hiding the Grand Duchess, I was extremely eager to have her receive the people who wanted to see her

In the meantime Princess Xenia had returned from the West Indies I was of the opinion that the first meeting between Xenia and Anastasia should take place without any witnesses Such was the isolation in which the Emperor's family had lived, that even Princess Xenia had known Anastasia but little and, there

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fore, could not be expected to recognise her at first glance. I thought it very important, therefore, to enable the two cousins to have a heart to heart talk during their first meeting which could well prove decisive in its consequences.

Also, being certain that the Princess would recognise Anastasia in the course of her very first talk with her, I wanted to preclude the possibility of any later accusations that the Grand Duchess had been guided by somebody during that talk. But my arguments proved of no avail. Both Xenia and Anastasia felt quite nervous about that first meeting, and each in turn asked me to be present.

I arrived at the Jennings' house a few minutes ahead of Xenia. In contrast with the day of Mr. Rachmaninoff's visit, I found the Grand Duchess, while undeniably nervous, quite happy at the prospect of seeing at last her cousin. I realised at once that there was luckily not the slightest reason to fear this time that Anastasia would again retire to the sanctum of her bed and cover herself up to her nose with blankets.

If only—I mused—everybody could observe the Grand Duchess as I was able to observe her. Had she been an impostor her conduct would have been exactly the opposite. She would have been only too eager to impress favorably so important a personage as Rachmaninoff, nor would she have tried to hide from him, because he had never known any member of the Emperor's immediate family and could not have judged of her identity on the basis of her appearance. At the same time, it was of the meeting with Princess Xenia that an impostor would have every reason to be afraid.

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But to Anastasia Rachmaninoff was a stranger and—as I have already explained—a man who in her eyes had not fulfilled his duty towards her father, the Emperor; hence she did not want to become acquainted with him. But Xenia was her cousin and she was most eager to see her.

Purposely, I made no reference to Xenia's expected visit, and Anastasia and I were engaged in some quite inconsequential conversation when the door opened and Xenia appeared on the threshold. She came in with a timid smile which made her more attractive than ever. I saw with astonishment a gayly plumed parrakeet perched on Xenia's shoulder and another one on her hand.

It proved an excellent idea—those parrakeets. Xenia had brought the two birds from the West Indies especially for Anastasia, and the Grand Duchess, so fond of all living creatures, was pleased beyond words. The parrakeets instantly proceeded to make themselves at home, fly all over the room and make funny faces at us, thus creating an atmosphere of cheerful informality and automatically starting an animated conversation.

I tried to remain as much as possible in the background, but both Anastasia and Xenia kept turning to me with questions and observations, so that the conversation remained general and nothing of any special significance was said by anybody. But the atmosphere was of the friendliest.

As in the course of my own first meeting with her, although Xenia and I talked mostly in Russian, Anastasia understood our every word. But there was one great difference between my first interview with the

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Grand Duchess in Secon and her present meeting with Xenia For in Secon Anastasia herself had spoken only German, while now, although she continued to speak in German with me, with Xenia she spoke in English—an English, moreover, which was not only fluent but much better than her German

Towards the end of the visit Anastasia and Xenia began to treat each other quite naturally and before parting kissed tenderly Xenia explained that she could not take Anastasia to Oyster Bay at once, but promised to do so soon and to visit her often in the meantime When Xenia finally left I wanted to go also, thinking that the Grand Duchess was probably tired, but she asked me to stay and have tea with her

"Have you recognised Princess Xenia?" I asked the Grand Duchess when we remained alone

"No," she said, with her usual frankness "I last saw her so very long ago and when we were both quite small I could not possibly have recognised her now that she is a grown up woman "

"Did you like her?" I asked

"I did yes " the Grand Duchess said haltingly "There is only one thing I did not quite like about her," she added after a pause

"What is it?" I asked

"Her eyes," Anastasia said

I was not a little astonished "But she has such beautiful eyes," I said

"Oh, yes, they are pretty," Anastasia agreed "But I did not mean that They are dark and I always mistrust dark eyes "

"How funny," I laughed "Why?"

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"Because I can't see through them," Anastasia explained. "Light eyes are transparent. One can see much easier what is going on in the mind of a person with light eyes. But dark eyes are like a screen which shields a person's thoughts and feelings. People with dark eyes are much more likely to be false than those with light eyes."

It was an interesting theory and I could not help reflecting that at least in the case of the two Imperial cousins it seemed to hold true. No eyes could be more transparent than Anastasia's own and few people possessed her complete frankness. But, as I had already discovered, the same could not be said of the dark-eyed Xenia.

I did not, however, share that particular observation of mine with the Grand Duchess. I did not want to arouse any suspicions in her concerning her cousin. Besides, I myself still did not believe Xenia capable of deceiving people of whom she was fond. To be sure, she had not been sincere with me, but I was a stranger to her. Now that she had actually fulfilled her promise and brought Anastasia over to this country, now that I had just seen her treat the Grand Duchess with such tact and affection, I was more than willing to attribute her somewhat Byzantine behaviour toward me to the difficulty of her position in her family and the efforts of so many gossips to antagonise her against me. That the Grand Duchess could trust Xenia fully I no longer doubted in the least and did my best to convince her of it.

Anastasia seemed quite willing to be convinced and

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listened to all my assurances with a pleased smile, but in the end said :

"I hope you are right. She has been very kind to me so far. I only wish she had different eyes "

On the whole, however, I was very much pleased with that first meeting between Anastasia and Xenia.

So, apparently, was Mrs Derfelden, who from the very day of Anastasia's arrival had maintained that no competent person could fail to recognise her.

"I myself have not known Anastasia," Mrs Derfelden had told me after she had seen the Grand Duchess for the first time "But her every gesture, her every word reminds me of one or another of her closest relatives. But it is of the Empress Dowager that she reminds me most. She walks exactly the way the Empress Dowager walks And did you notice those strange modulations of her voice—that constant change from high pitched notes to low, singing tones? The only person with such a voice I have ever known is, again, the Empress Dowager "

Now Mrs Derfelden hastened to tell me that Xenia too had become convinced of Anastasia's identity.

"Yet Xenia was quite sceptical about it before," she added.

That last remark astonished me a great deal. On one hand, of course, Xenia's newly revealed scepticism explained further why it had proved so difficult to hold her to her promise of bringing the Grand Duchess over to this country. But now I began to wonder why had Xenia always assured me of her complete faith in Anastasia's identity, if—as it now appeared—she had no such faith at the time.

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But I preferred not to raise that question. The more opportunity I had to observe Royalty with a dispassionate eye, free from my former childish adoration of them, the clearer it became to me that their ways were strange and impossible of explanation on the ground of normal human psychology.

VIII

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ONE evening, a day or two after Xenia's arrival, Miss Jennings called me up on the telephone and asked me to come to her house as soon as I could get there. I was not a little perturbed, for I lived on Long Island and felt certain that neither Miss Jennings—nor, least of all, Anastasia herself—would want me to come to the city at such a late hour, unless something unusual and probably unpleasant had happened.

My guess proved correct. It was about eleven o'clock when I reached Miss Jennings' house, but none of its inhabitants seemed to think of retiring; telephones kept ringing and servants were dashing back and forth in answer to many summonses. I was met by Miss Jennings in person who took me aside and said:

"We had a telephone call from Billy Leeds. He has received a report about a plot to kill the Grand Duchess to-night. Most unfortunately, it was the Grand Duchess herself who answered the phone. I was watching her while she talked and understood at once that something terrible had happened. Her face turned ashen grey and she almost dropped the receiver. I then took it away from her and Leeds repeated the story to me. It appears that Leeds' informant has overheard in the subway a conversation between two men who were discussing the plot."

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"I should not be surprised if such a plot actually existed," I said. "But I cannot understand how a plot of this kind could be so openly discussed by two men—in the subway, of all places."

"It seems strange," Miss Jennings agreed. "But you can never tell. The best organised plots are often given away in some such foolish manner. The men who talked about it did not seem to be the participants in the plot, but one of them was apparently well familiar with it. But, whether the story is true or not, we certainly can take no chances. Billy Leeds could not go into many details over the telephone, but he assured me that he has good reasons to believe that the matter must be regarded seriously."

"Have you notified the police?" I asked.

"I have," Miss Jennings said, "and they are sending a plain-clothes man to watch this block. I have also telephoned a detective agency and told them to send two of their men. We have searched the house for bombs but found nothing. But we discovered that it was possible to reach the Grand Duchess's room by climbing along the edge of the roof, and I gave her, therefore, a different room on another floor, which is quite inaccessible from the outside. Can you think of anything else that ought to be done?"

"It seems to me you have already done everything possible," I said.

"Very well," Miss Jennings said. "Then let's go to the drawing room. The Grand Duchess is there alone and she is very nervous."

We found Anastasia pacing the floor, crumpling a handkerchief in her fingers as she usually did when

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excited. Her face was covered with red spots—a peculiar effect of nervousness she had inherited from her mother, the late Empress Alexandra.

"This is terrible!" she said to me as soon as I entered the room.

"The only terrible thing about it is that you have been told that silly story," I said. "I would not take it too seriously; and I can see that with Miss Jennings watching over you as she does there is really nothing to fear."

Miss Jennings smiled, flattered. "You can rest assured that nothing will happen to this little lady as long as she stays with me," she said. "I am not afraid of anybody. I am a fighter! I will defy King George himself with all his fleet, if necessary!"

The more I saw of Miss Jennings the more I liked her, in spite of her somewhat austere attitude. Her feeling towards Anastasia was really touching.

"Such a lovely child she is," Miss Jennings told me several times. "And so sensitive! She makes me think of a high-strung instrument which one has only to touch to make every string in it vibrate."

We proceeded to discuss further Leeds' report, but were interrupted by the butler who announced the arrival of the men from the detective agency. Miss Jennings asked me to go with her to the hall to talk to them. We found two individuals who looked like professional thugs. One of them had a long scar across his face. Both wore automatics at their trouser belts. They smiled obsequiously but started the conversation by demanding an advance payment of \$100. I did not know whether to trust my ears, but Miss Jennings took

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out a pack of bills and gave the detectives a hundred dollars as I would have given a nickel. Her readiness to pay any price asked for the Grand Duchess's protection was touching, but I was unable not to reflect that so much money could be put to much better use than the hiring of those men who inspired me with anything but confidence.

After some discussion of the situation it was decided that one of the men would remain on watch in the hall, while the other would guard the house from the outside. The matter settled we returned to the drawing room.

"I feel much safer now that the detectives are here," Miss Jennings said.

"So do I," I said. "If those two bandits will neither kill nor rob you, nobody else will."

Miss Jennings laughed. "They only look that way," she said. "They come from a very reliable agency."

"I still feel too nervous to go to bed," Anastasia said.

"And you do not have to go to bed," Miss Jennings answered. "Naturally, you feel nervous. But we are here to keep you company."

We sat down by the fireplace and Miss Jennings plunged into endless reminiscences. In her seventy odd years she had seen enough things to keep an audience interested for much longer than a single evening, and her picturesque and juicy speech of an old New Yorker added further to the charm of her recollections.

I kept observing the Grand Duchess and noticed with satisfaction how she was gradually calming down under the soothing influence of Miss Jennings' stories. Little by little the red spots disappeared from her face.

and after a while she began again to smile. But from time to time she cast an anxious glance at the clock and finally said:

"I am so ashamed to keep everybody up. But I am still a little afraid to be left alone."

"What nonsense!" Miss Jennings exclaimed. "You are not keeping anybody up. We are having a wonderful time, aren't we?" she turned to me for confirmation. "We shall be glad to sit here till sunrise, if you want us to, won't we?"

I assured the ladies that I was quite prepared to sit till sunrise and the following sunset. On my own part I actually enjoyed the evening a great deal.

About half-past one Anastasia began to yawn and smiling sleepily said that she was now ready to go to bed.

"Well, I think that it is quite safe for you to go to bed now," Miss Jennings agreed. "If nothing has happened so far, I do not believe that anything will later. The house is well guarded and it is quite impossible for anybody to get into your new room from the outside."

"Yes, I know. I am no longer afraid," the Grand Duchess said. "But what shall we do about him?" she smiled, pointing at me with her finger. "If there are any people who want to kill me they certainly must be just as determined to kill Botkin."

I felt deeply moved by the Grand Duchess's solicitude, but assured her that I did not regard myself as being at all in danger.

"I wouldn't be so certain of that," Miss Jennings observed.

"Of course, you are in danger!" the Grand Duchess

exclaimed. "Couldn't we keep him here for a few days?" she asked Miss Jennings. "It would be terrible if he gets killed."

"You are perfectly right and I should be delighted to keep him here!" Miss Jennings answered. Then, turning to me, she added: "You must stay here at least until this whole affair is cleared up. We certainly cannot afford to lose you."

"You will not lose me so easily," I laughed. "And if you do, it will not be much of a loss. With you and Princess Xenia taking care of Her Imperial Highness, I could be safely dispensed with."

"I think you underestimate your own rôle," Miss Jennings said. "Do you know, for instance, that it was because of your articles in the newspapers that I became so interested in the Grand Duchess's case? They were so convincing that, after reading them, I no longer had the slightest doubt that she was the Grand Duchess; and they made me so eager to do something for her. Had I known how to get in touch with you, I should have offered to bring her over to this country right then."

Another irony of fate, I mused. To think that during those weary months when I was running all over New York trying in vain to get somebody's help for the Grand Duchess, Miss Jennings wanted nothing better than to give that help, but did not know how to approach me. It was, however, a little more than just an irony of fate. Miss Jennings was well acquainted with both Princess Xenia and Mrs. Derfelden, and Anastasia's presence in her house proved that Miss Jennings had offered her help to Xenia. Why then—I won-

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dered—had neither of those ladies put Miss Jennings in touch with me? Why had Xenia pretended for so long that she did not know where to find the money for Anastasia's transportation?

Those, however, were now questions which no longer seemed to matter. As for Anastasia's and Miss Jennings' invitation to stay with them until the danger to us was over, I appreciated it greatly, but could not accept it. There seemed not the slightest chance for any malefactor to penetrate into Miss Jennings' house, but my wife and children were quite unprotected, so that I thought it wiser to return home. After arguing some more, the two ladies agreed to let me go, but made me promise to come back on the following day.

So I did and found the Grand Duchess once more in a very good mood. Now she seemed to think all the excitement of last night quite funny, although she was by no means certain that Mr. Leeds' report had been entirely groundless. Neither was I, but we were never to discover whether any such plot had actually existed.

Anastasia showed me her new room and not only retained me for the whole afternoon, but when the time for dinner came, began to insist that I should dine with her. Nothing could have pleased me more, but I felt that it would be rather an imposition on Miss Jennings and frankly said so to Anastasia. She looked at me with a puzzled expression and asked:

"But why should you worry about Miss Jennings when I am inviting you?"

Asked by any other person in Anastasia's position, such a question would have appeared as plain lack of consideration on the part of a guest towards her hostess.

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But certainly nobody could have been more considerate towards her friends, including Miss Jennings, than Anastasia was. Simply, under all circumstances she remained—quite unconsciously so—a Grand Duchess, the Emperor's daughter. And if she—the Grand Duchess—wanted to invite somebody for dinner, who could possibly object? Above all, how could I have any misgivings about accepting her invitation? Very likely Miss Jennings herself had told her to invite anybody she pleased, but whether she had or not, Anastasia was obviously of the opinion that it was not for me to question her actions, least of all to wonder whether it was proper to accept her invitation.

I saw that I could not refuse to stay for dinner without offending her mortally, but felt far from comfortable about the matter until Miss Jennings appeared in person. Anastasia was not in the room at the moment, but seeing me Miss Jennings smiled and said:

"I am so glad you are still here. I have to go out and was quite worried about leaving our little lady alone. Could you do me a favour and have dinner with her?"

I heaved a sigh of relief and hastened to assure Miss Jennings that I would be delighted to stay for dinner. She thanked me and left. A few minutes later Anastasia came back and I told her about Miss Jennings' visit. She burst into laughter.

"Now what did I tell you?" she exclaimed. "Miss Jennings didn't invite me! Miss Jennings didn't invite me! Now she did invite you, didn't she? But why should you have worried at all when I have invited you?"

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All of which she said without a trace of arrogance, but in the same tone in which in the days of our childhood she used to tease me with having been fooled by the shoe she had left under the curtain, or my inability to turn on the electric switch in my father's stateroom. Obviously, she felt that I had committed a terrible *faux-pas* by having hesitated to accept her invitation, and now that, on top of everything else, my hesitation had actually proved quite unnecessary, was delighted with such an opportunity to tease me.

A few days later Anastasia said to me: "I am afraid that I shall quarrel with you soon."

"Why?" I asked, somewhat dismayed.

"I don't know why," she said, shaking her head with a puzzled expression on her face. "I always quarrel with people. But you know it yourself. With all the people who tried to help me in Germany I have quarrelled, one after another—Dr. Gruenberg, the Schwabes, Mrs. von Rathlef . . . There seems to be a devil in me who makes me quarrel with people."

"In some of the cases—the Schwabes, for instance—I think, from what I know, that you were quite justified in quarrelling," I said. "Why you have quarrelled with Mrs. von Rathlef I could never quite understand. I admit that she does not have what is called a winning personality, but she is sincerely devoted to you. Be that as it may, if you know that there is such a devil in you, why succumb to him? Why don't you try to combat that devil? Each of us has at least one, often many such devils in him. But we try to combat them. Why don't you?"

She looked at me pensively, then shook her head

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again and said: "I can't explain it myself. But I do know that there is nothing I can do with that particular devil. I know it is wrong. I know there is no reason for it. But I also know that there is no person near me with whom I shall not quarrel sooner or later. I think I have kept from quarrelling with you for a longer time than with any other person. But I know that in the end I shall quarrel with you too. I almost did when you brought Rachmaninoff to me," she concluded with a guilty little smile.

"It will be a sad day for me," I said. "But of one thing I want to assure you: you may quarrel with me as much as you please, but I shall never lose my devotion for you. So, should you ever need me after having quarrelled with me, please remember that you can always count on me."

"I felt so myself," the Grand Duchess said. "It was because of this that I have started this conversation. There is something I must tell you before I have quarrelled with you. Do you know anything about that matter of my money in the Bank of England?"

I gave a start. I had heard so many different stories about that money, but had never dared to question the Grand Duchess herself on the subject.

"I do know a little," I said. "But I certainly do not know all of it."

Anastasia's face assumed a very grave expression and her eyes became moist. I knew now what that expression on her face meant: she was thinking about the past. My guess proved correct.

"It was then . . . in Ekaterinburg, shortly before that dreadful night . . . you know . . ." she began

haltingly. "My father called us once together—my sisters and myself, I mean . . . He told us that were any of us to escape by some miracle, we should remember that we had money in the Bank of England."

She paused and began to crumple her handkerchief. I could see how she was struggling with herself in an effort not to lose her self-control. Every recollection of those horrible days made her suffer agonies, often even caused her to run a high fever.

"I should like to ask you a question," I said.

She nodded, indicating that she would allow me to do so.

"Why did His Majesty tell my father in Tobolsk, that he had no money left in the Bank of England?"

"Because he did not have any money left there," Anastasia answered. "My father had used all his own money to pay for the munitions Russia bought from England during the war. The money he told us about was our money. He had it deposited shortly before the war for my sisters and myself. He told us that he had not felt it his right to touch that money, because it was ours. And he also told us that it was a camouflaged account of which nobody knew anything, except the man who had deposited the money, and which could not be found by simply examining the bank's books. He told us also the name of that man who knew about it, and the amount. I do remember the amount—five million roubles for each of us, that is, twenty million roubles in all. But I do not remember the man's name. I tried and tried to remember it, but never could. All I do remember is that it was not a Russian name, but a

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Germanic name—a very short name . . . a one syllable name . . .”

She paused again, then once more shook her head and said: “No, I cannot remember it. But when Aunt Olga came to see me in Berlin in 1925 she asked me whether I knew anything about the money left by my father in England. She said that she and Aunt Xenia had searched everywhere and could not find it, yet they thought that there had been money left in the Bank of England. I told her then why she could not find it. There was no money of my father’s left in England—only ours. And I told her everything about it—what I am now telling you. . . .”

I sat breathless, afraid to interrupt that tragic yet all-important account which was to give me at last the complete picture of how the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga had betrayed their unfortunate niece.

“I also told it all to Zahle,” the Grand Duchess resumed. “And he wrote to the Bank of England and received the answer that the money was there and everything I had told him was correct. It was, of course, a very confidential answer, which Zahle will never show to anybody. The Bank wrote him only because he was the Danish Ambassador and taking care of my affairs at the request of my Danish granduncle. But Zahle did show it to me and he also said that, unless I would claim that money, it would be given to my aunts ten years after my sisters’ and supposedly my own death. Do you understand what that means? Ten years will expire on July 17th of this year. And do you know what my aunts have done? They have de-

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clared me an impostor and made a claim for my money."

"I know," I said; and how very difficult I found it to say those two words.

"July 17th is not far away," Anastasia said, "and nothing has been done as yet to prevent my aunts from getting my money . . ." Suddenly her eyes lit with anger. "I do not care about that money!" she exclaimed. "I wish it had never existed! But I do care that my aunts should not be rewarded for their treason by being given that money. It is this that I wanted to tell you: promise me that they will not get it! Promise me that even if I should quarrel with you, you will not let them have it! Let it disappear, vanish, but promise me that my aunts will not profit by their treason!"

I felt shaken to the very depths of my heart. Never

New York City, December 15th, 1928.

I, Grand Duchesse Anastasia Nikolayevna, youngest daughter and only surviving child of the late Emperor Nicholas II and Empress Alexandra of Russia, do hereby declare that after our family had left St. Petersburg and were in exile at Ekaterinberg in Siberia, very shortly before the deaths of the other members of my family, my Father told my three sisters and myself that before the World War in 1914, he had deposited in the Bank Of England Five Million Roubles each for my three sisters and myself.

In 1925, when I was in Berlin, the Danish Ambassador Zahle at Berlin, when I had told of this deposit, of monies, made official inquiries, and very shortly afterward informed me that he had received an answer to his inquiry, that there were monies on deposit for my sisters and myself in the Bank Of England, but the Bank was unwilling to state the amount.

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before had the disloyalty of the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga appeared to me so clearly—in all its unforgivable ugliness. Never before had I realised so fully what ghastly wound they had inflicted on Anastasia's childishly trusting soul.

Nor would anybody—I venture to say—no matter how aloof or even callous, have felt differently in my place. Seldom have I seen a human face express such utter misery as when the Grand Duchess spoke of her aunts' "treason." Nor could the greatest cynic have doubted the profound sincerity of Anastasia's words—or rather moan of despair. "I do not care about that money! But I do care that my aunts should not be rewarded for their treason."

As I remained silent, too upset to say anything, Grand Duchess Anastasia asked

"Do you promise?"

"I promise!" I answered.

"Even if I should quarrel with you?"

"Even if you should quarrel with me," I said, "do anything, save kill me. Should such a danger arise, I will not leave a stone unturned to prevent your aunts from getting your money!"

Anastasia gave me a long, grateful look, but said nothing more.¹

¹Early in 1914 a private banker M. Peter Bark was appointed as the Russian Minister of Finance and while in office made several trips to England. Subsequently M. Bark was dismissed from service but after the revolution emigrated to England where he became the Managing Director of the Anglo-International Bank—a large subsidiary of the Bank of England. He died early in 1937. The fact that he possessed a one-syllable Germanic name may however be a pure coincidence for it is understood that he never revealed the existence of the fortune in the Bank of England even to the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga whose close adviser he was.

I had given that promise in all sincerity, would have given it under any circumstances. At the same time, I did not think, while giving it, that I should ever be called upon to do anything about the matter. Every time I met her, Mrs. Derfelden assured me again and again that there was nothing left for me to worry about, that Princess Xenia, having fully recognised Anastasia, would do everything for her, take her on a visit to the Empress Dowager, obtain her formal recognition and have all her rights restored to her. And if I had learned not to take too seriously either Mrs. Derfelden's or Xenia's assurances given to me personally, I yet felt utterly convinced that never would they betray Grand Duchess Anastasia.

For the present, all I wanted was to see Anastasia installed in Oyster Bay. With Miss Jennings Anastasia was, of course, quite safe and well taken care of, but, in spite of all, her kindnesses and attentions, Miss Jennings remained a stranger to the Grand Duchess. I also felt it important for Anastasia and Xenia to become better acquainted before their proposed visit to the Empress Dowager; and that visit had to take place before very long if Anastasia's aunts were to be prevented from inheriting her money. Finally, with the approach of spring it was so much better for Anastasia to be in the country than in the city.

I was, therefore, greatly pleased when in early spring Princess Xenia at last took the Grand Duchess to Oyster Bay. I felt that my own mission in the struggle for Anastasia's rehabilitation had thus been brought to a successful end, giving me the moral right to return to my regular work. It was high time for me to do so

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because my family was by now in pretty desperate straits.

Needless to say, I planned to visit the Grand Duchess in Oyster Bay from time to time, but, aside from the necessity of devoting myself wholly to the task of earning a living, I thought that for the first few weeks at least the two cousins had best be left to themselves; I informed, therefore, Princess Xenia that I would not come to Oyster Bay without a special invitation on her part.

That invitation came much earlier than I had expected. One day Xenia telephoned and asked me to meet her in the city at her doctor's office whence she would drive me to Oyster Bay.

She greeted me with all the cheerful cordiality of our earlier meetings and began at once to talk about Anastasia.

"Now I quite agree with you," she said among other things, "that nobody who has seen her can have any honest doubt as to her identity. And I am glad to say that Anastasia and I are getting along beautifully together."

She proceeded to tell me of all the amusing little occurrences in her daily life with Anastasia, of the latter's charm, wit and incomparable sense of humour. How good it was to hear all those familiar stories! I felt back in Czarskoe Selo, listening to the latest account of the delightful activities of the adorable "Little One."

It appeared that the parrakeets Xenia had brought from the West Indies also contributed a great deal to the joyful excitement of the new life in Oyster Bay.

Particularly funny was Xenia's story about the commotion the parrakeets had caused one day by flying out the window. It happened in the morning when all the inhabitants of the Leeds' house were only beginning to get out of their beds and Xenia herself was sitting in her bathtub. Luckily, after a scene which, if photographed, would probably have made the best Hollywood comedies appear tame by comparison, the parrakeets had been induced to return to the house.

"But at times," Xenia said, "Anastasia gets very sad; especially, when she remembers some of her experiences. Did she tell you, for instance, of her journey from Roumania to Germany?"

"No, she did not," I said. "I always have tried to keep her from dwelling on such horrible memories."

"One has to," Xenia agreed. "But every once in a while she begins to talk of them and then one cannot stop her. One evening I was telling her of my own experiences at the beginning of 1920 and she suddenly became terribly upset and said: 'And to think that all of you led such happy lives then. Do you know what I was doing in 1920?' And she began to tell me of that journey. I assure you, it was an ordeal merely to listen to her. It appears that having no passports, she and that Tschaikovsky, or whoever he was, had to cross every frontier unobserved by the authorities, and to do so were often forced to walk for miles through uninhabited regions. All of that in the middle of the winter and with Anastasia barely able to stand on her feet. One story she told me about roaming in a forest with hungry wolves howling on all sides, really made my

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hair stand on end. It is hardly possible to imagine what she has suffered—the poor thing."

"All I know," I said, "is that at the time of my own escape from Russia I felt that I had suffered the maximum I was able to endure. A little more, and I should have gone mad or committed suicide. Yet I am a man, in a normal state of health, and certainly the worst things that happened to me appear as nothing compared to Anastasia Nikolaevna's experiences. That she was able to go through all that without turning into a raving lunatic, indeed without even losing her courage, her sense of humour, her sense of the joy of life, is beyond my comprehension. She is a true wonder."

"She is," Xenia agreed.

After a while the Princess began to question me in considerable detail on the nature of the existing proofs of Anastasia's identity. Xenia was particularly eager to locate two lost pieces of evidence which were actually quite important. One was a bracelet which Anastasia had always worn, but which had been taken away from her in Dalldorf. The other was the English letter Anastasia had written also in Dalldorf in 1920 to her godmother, Princess Irene of Prussia. That letter had been given either by the Dalldorf authorities or by Anastasia herself to the same Russian who in 1925 had managed, in some mysterious way, to dissuade Sergei Tschaikovsky from trying to get in touch with Police Commissioner Gruenberg.

Some of the questions on which I myself was not quite clear I advised Xenia to discuss with Anastasia personally.

"I wanted to," Xenia said, "but Anastasia does not

like to talk much of all those affairs. Besides, she seems to have an unbounded confidence in you. When it comes to such technical problems, about the only answer I can obtain from her is: 'Ask Botkin. He knows what to do.' From the way Anastasia talks of you one would think that there is nothing in the world you do not know or could not do. You see, it appears that you are still quite indispensable to us."

The last remark Xenia made with a smile, but the kind of smile which gave me the impression that she was far from pleased with that particular phase of the situation.

I hastened to assure Xenia that, while I was deeply touched by the Grand Duchess's high opinion of me and on my own part was only too eager to be of help, I certainly could no longer be regarded as indispensable. My only value consisted of my rather thorough knowledge of Anastasia's case, but anybody could acquire similar knowledge by applying himself to the study of it with sufficient diligence.

We arrived in Oyster Bay just in time for dinner to which Xenia had also invited her sister, Princess Nina, and Mrs. Derfelden. Anastasia, as usual, preferred to eat alone in her room. The atmosphere at the dining table appeared of the friendliest and after dinner Xenia took me upstairs where the Grand Duchess was awaiting us.

I was happy to observe the cordial familiarity which had established itself between Anastasia and Xenia. They had obviously become genuinely fond of each other. Also, as I had expected, Anastasia appeared much more content and at home than she had been in

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Miss Jennings' house. We chatted for more than an hour and only once did Anastasia's good mood give way to a sudden flash of displeasure. As usual, Xenia and I began to talk to each other in Russian, but Anastasia interrupted us:

"Please do not speak that awful language in my presence!" she exclaimed. "Why do you have to do it when you can both speak English? If you two could only realise how painful the very sound of Russian is to me!"

It was the first time that I heard the Grand Duchess state her true reason for refusing to speak Russian and at times even pretending that she did not understand it. I felt rather dismayed. The ease with which she had resumed the use of English had given me the hope that one day Anastasia would in like manner begin to talk Russian. But, whatever her reasons for refusing to speak English may have been, she certainly had never disliked the language itself—on the contrary, was very fond of it.

That the Russian language had become hateful to her was not difficult to understand. From the very beginning of the revolution the Sovereigns and their children had been constantly subjected to the humiliation of being ordered by their different guardians to talk Russian. All the abusive remarks, the obscene jokes which they had been forced to endure during *their last months in Ekaterinburg* had, of course, also been said in Russian. It was only natural, therefore, that Russian had become to Anastasia, so to speak, the enemy's language. And if such were the case there was

little hope that she would ever want to speak Russian again.

Except for that revelation, I was extremely pleased by everything I had seen and heard on that day in Oyster Bay. To see "the Little One" not only in safety and comfort, or rather luxury, but in the midst of her own relatives, among people none of whom questioned any longer her identity, who treated and addressed her as her own self, gave me a tremendous joy. Truly, she had not been in such congenial, and in every respect favourable, surroundings since the very time of her escape from Russia. I could not feel grateful enough to Princess Xenia, and no longer regretted all the delays, tribulations, unpleasantnesses and sacrifices which had proved necessary to achieve such happy results.

Regrettably, my joy was not to remain undiluted for long. One day Mrs. Derfelden informed me—rather gleefully, I thought—that Anastasia was terribly angry with me and would never see me again.

"Why? What's happened?" I asked, bewildered.

"She has discovered that, after your return from Europe, you have written about her in newspapers," Mrs. Derfelden said. "I am afraid you have done her a great wrong. She has trusted you so blindly. You ought to have seen how horrified she was when in answer to her question I had to admit that you have written newspaper articles about her. I only wish I could have lied, but I had to tell her the truth. She was simply crushed."

"This is absurd!" I retorted. "She knew all along that I have written about her."

Mrs. Derfelden seemed somewhat taken aback.

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"Perhaps she has forgotten it," she said "Anyway, she was simply horrified "

But I did not pay much attention to the rest of her story The truth of the matter was only too obvious Anastasia had always known that I had written about her and her very trust in me was based largely on the fact that I was the first to state openly in print that she was actually and beyond all doubt Grand Duchess Anastasia If my newspaper articles about her had anything to do with the Grand Duchess's sudden anger against me, it must have taken Mrs Derfelden a great deal of time to persuade her that I ought not to have written about her

All of which was very sad, but not necessarily tragic In a way, Mrs Derfelden's efforts to antagonise the Grand Duchess against me had to be taken as a very good sign Mrs Derfelden had to feel pretty certain of Anastasia's early recognition by her family if she was already fighting so hard for the position of the Grand Duchess's closest confidante I even could not help laughing at that miniature Imperial Court, with all its intrigues and subterranean struggles, which had so quickly developed in Oyster Bay But my own task had already been accomplished The Grand Duchess no longer needed me My absence from her entourage could conceivably even help matters by bringing her and Xenia closer together I had restored Anastasia into her own circle and now it was only proper for me to withdraw

But Mrs Derfelden wanted apparently to make a thorough job of my withdrawal, for a few days after her announcement that Anastasia had decided never to

see me again she called me up on the telephone and, without any preliminary explanations, asked:

"What have you done with that costly jewel the Grand Duchess entrusted to you? She wants it back from you immediately!"

"Costly jewel?" I asked, uncomprehending. "When on earth did the Grand Duchess possess a costly jewel? I am sure, I do not understand what you are talking about."

"Oh, you ought to have a better explanation than that!" Mrs. Derfelden retorted with no attempt at politeness. "The Grand Duchess told me to-day that in Secon she had given you a costly jewel, and now she wants it back. Where is it?"

I was about to say something not very polite and hang up when I suddenly remembered—the swastika; the swastika which my sister had given to Anastasia and Anastasia had given to me with the request to return it to my sister. Having been unable to see my sister in France, I had kept the swastika and so informed the Grand Duchess. As for its cost, still plainly marked on the box, it amounted to exactly 25 French francs, or, according to the exchange of the time, one American dollar!

"You are not talking about a swastika, by any chance?" I asked Mrs. Derfelden.

"Ah, so you do remember?" she said triumphantly. "Yes, a gold swastika studded with rubies."

"Certainoly," I said. "Now I remember and shall be glad to return it to you immediately."

"I am glad you still have it," Mrs. Derfelden said meaningfully.

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I took the "costly jewel" and hastened with it to Mrs. Derfelden's apartment. She almost tore the little box out of my hands. But the moment she opened it her jaw dropped and completely losing her usual poise she exclaimed:

"This horrible little jigger?"

"Rather bad, isn't it?" I said. "However, it was a present from my sister and the best she could afford, I am sure."

Mrs. Derfelden, who now looked extremely ill at ease, launched on a lengthy explanation as to how the Grand Duchess had supposedly led her to believe that she had given me a jewel of great value, but I hastened to take leave of her. It was very convenient always to blame everything on Anastasia; and whatever Anastasia may or may not have said, and whether she was actually angry at me or not, I felt certain that at the bottom of her heart she continued, and always would continue, to trust me.

She may, perhaps, have temporarily succumbed to that devil in her of which she herself had warned me. Even then, that devil, in the present instance at least, did not seem to have come entirely by himself. Nor could I feel in the least offended with her, for a person who had gone through such horrible experiences would be justified in doing worse things than succumbing from time to time to that devil of quarrelsomeness and mistrust.

But I could not help feeling amused at all the trouble to which Xenia and Mrs. Derfelden were putting themselves in their effort to eliminate me from any further participation in Anastasia's case. Why, I won-

dered, those quarrels, accusations, intrigues—all that ugly mess, when, as I myself had repeatedly made clear to her, all Xenia had to do in order never to see me again was simply to cease inviting me to Oyster Bay.

But all those were purely academic speculations. The main fact remained that I had done for the Grand Duchess all that had seemed possible for me to do under the circumstances and could do nothing more. Not unless Grand Duchess Anastasia should find herself again in trouble would I so much as think of returning to any participation in her affairs; and I felt virtually certain that her troubles were over.

IX

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THE month of June had just begun. I was working hard on my book, making illustrations, planning to revive a syndicate feature I had been running in 1926 . . . The case of Grand Duchess Anastasia—so strange, so utterly unrelated to a normal existence in the modern world—was rapidly relegating itself in my memory to the position of a bewildering interlude which refused to attach itself to any definite time and clearly did not seem to belong to everyday reality.

From time to time I received, indirectly, some news about the Grand Duchess. Apparently everything was going well with her. Princess Xenia had repeatedly stated her certainty that her guest was indeed her cousin, Grand Duchess Anastasia of Russia. Grand Duke Andrew had likewise made public his acknowledgement of Anastasia and confirmed it emphatically in several letters; he even authorised the publication of one of them in the editor's foreword to a book Mrs. von Rathlef was about to publish. In it he wrote among other things:

"We next come to the question which has given rise to considerable doubt, whether the 'Unknown' resembles the Grand Duchess (Anastasia) in appearance. I have seen her personally, and was greatly impressed by the striking similarity; I was even more struck by the general family

resemblance which in some respects is of almost greater importance than a personal likeness. My impression was, of course, a personal one, but it was so strong and so convincing that I could come to no other conclusion than that the patient could only be Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna herself.

"All the doubts so far expressed by the press are completely removed by the scientific and practical results of my investigation."

In his letter to me Grand Duke Andrew wrote:

"I think I do not have to explain to you to what extent I am interested in the fate of the Grand Duchess, especially after our meeting in Paris when I have fully recognised her. That meeting provoked a real storm in many circles, and most unexpected protests. If before some people were mildly hostile to her, their hostility has now acquired an especially acute form. Apparently, it is most unpleasant to somebody. Therefore measures of special precaution must be taken to make the future of the Grand Duchess secure, and we must prepare ourselves for the unavoidable fight for her."

In the same letter, by the way, dated April 3rd, 1928, Grand Duke Andrew wrote also:

"As for the future development of the case, it seems to me that it will be impossible to avoid a litigation in court. If all the relatives will be against her, and at present there are no reasons for them to acknowledge her, the Grand Duchess will have to start court action in order to wash off herself the humiliating label 'impostor.'"

"On this account I am corresponding with a prominent German lawyer in Berlin who, after investigating the case, has arrived at the conclusion that it will be comparatively easy to win such a litigation."

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Andrew further expressed the hope that Princess Xenia would finance the litigation and contribute the \$50,000 which he regarded as the necessary minimum. He admitted that the cost seemed high but argued that it was "nothing if compared with the tortures and suffering the Grand Duchess had gone through."

It was lucky, I reflected, that the litigation had proved unnecessary. Xenia's plan of taking Anastasia on a visit to the Empress Dowager was, of course, much the better. That visit, I assumed, would have to take place very soon. For the present Grand Duchess Anastasia was staying with Mrs. Derfelden and Miss Jennings in the latter's house in Bridgeport, Connecticut, but was supposed to return shortly to Oyster Bay and then go with Princess Xenia to Europe.

All of which was most gratifying. And at times I permitted myself the luxury of picturing that happy day—in a none too distant future—when all newspapers would carry cables from Europe announcing the formal acknowledgment of Grand Duchess Anastasia by her grandmother.

But one afternoon I was called up on the telephone by Mrs. Derfelden. I had not expected ever to see or hear from her again and, besides, had believed her to be still in Connecticut. My astonishment changed to alarm when Mrs. Derfelden, with all the friendliness of former days, asked me to come at once to her apartment in order to discuss a matter of great importance to Grand Duchess Anastasia. Something pretty bad must have happened, I thought, if Mrs. Derfelden, of all people, was turning to me for help.

Mrs. Derfelden welcomed me as if no unpleasant-

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ness had ever occurred between us. She told me that she had just returned from Connecticut because Anastasia had quarrelled with her. Much to my joy, Mrs. Derfelden was not blaming the Grand Duchess in the least. She even maintained that she could probably have patched up the quarrel had it not been for Miss Jennings and Princess Xenia both of whom had sided with Anastasia.

"But what I wanted to see you about is this," Mrs. Derfelden said. "Anastasia told me that she had made you promise not to let her aunts inherit her money. She made me give her the same promise. I happen to know for certain that nothing at all is being done to prevent the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga from inheriting Anastasia's money. We are already in the beginning of June and they are to get the money in July. Now Anastasia is back in Oyster Bay and Princess Xenia does not allow anybody—not even me—to either see Anastasia or communicate with her in any way. You can guess the rest."

"And how about Xenia's promise to take Anastasia to Denmark?" I asked.

Mrs. Derfelden shrugged her shoulders. "I do not believe Xenia plans to take her anywhere," she said.

"But why? What has happened?" I asked. "Has Xenia changed her mind in regard to Anastasia's identity?"

"No, not at all," Mrs. Derfelden said. "Xenia is as convinced of Anastasia's identity as ever. But apparently she has decided to let Anastasia's aunts have her money. And they will get it unless *you* do something

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to prevent them. And inasmuch as you have promised Anastasia . . .”

She launched on a long speech, trying to convince me that I could not fail in my duty towards the Grand Duchess.

“And another thing,” she said in conclusion. “Grand Duchess Xenia is again making the ugliest accusations against Grand Duchess Anastasia and all those who have befriended her, including myself. *You* cannot afford to permit her to talk about us in this manner. After all, by defending Anastasia and me against Xenia, you will be defending your own reputation.”

I could not help chuckling at this latter observation. Apparently Mrs. Derfelden simply could not conceive of anybody doing anything without some ulterior motive.

Those, however, were incidental reflections. The fact remained that I needed no inducement to come to the assistance of Anastasia now that she had once more fallen into a trap. And what a trap! Were the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga allowed to inherit Anastasia's fortune, they would never be able to acknowledge her publicly after that, for such acknowledgment would be equivalent to an admission on their part that they had accepted from the Bank of England money belonging to Anastasia. And when even now people were so hesitant in helping Anastasia, for fear of displeasing her aunts, who would so much as move a finger for her when her formal acknowledgment would threaten those aunts with such dire consequences?

We discussed the situation at length. Needless to say, I did not know how much I could accomplish.

Mrs. Derfelden, completely ignoring her recent detestation of newspapers, urged me to give the situation the widest possible publicity and make it generally known that the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga—and not Anastasia and her friends—were the real culprits. To me, however, it seemed that this time publicity alone was not likely to do Anastasia much good. Just that spring I had made the acquaintance of a distinguished lawyer, the Hon. Edward H. Fallows, son of the late Bishop Samuel Fallows of the Reformed Episcopal Church. Mr. Fallows, who at one time had been very close to President Theodore Roosevelt, enjoyed excellent connections not only in this country, but also in England. He also seemed much interested in the case of Grand Duchess Anastasia. I told Mrs. Derfelden that I should like to consult Mr. Fallows and she agreed that it was the best thing I could do.

I returned home from my visit to Mrs. Derfelden in a very sad mood. All my hopes for an early recognition of Grand Duchess Anastasia were eclipsed. I blamed myself for having so stubbornly disregarded all the many past actions of Princess Xenia. But at the same time it distressed me deeply to admit that a person of Xenia's charm and loveliness could have misled not only me, but also one of her best friends, Mrs. Derfelden, and, worst of all, her unfortunate cousin. Xenia's conduct was the more baffling because, unlike most of her relatives, she did have the courage to acknowledge openly Grand Duchess Anastasia. The whole situation seemed quite incomprehensible and equally exasperating. I felt I was emerging from a fool's paradise into an extremely messy reality.

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On the following day I called on Mr. Fallows and had a long conversation with him which I later confirmed with a seven-page letter. I stated to him emphatically that I represented nobody other than myself, that I was not empowered to act as Grand Duchess Anastasia's agent, and, also, that as far as the situation in the Bank of England was concerned, I had no direct personal knowledge of it. But I gave Mr. Fallows all my reasons for believing that Anastasia's own story about her money in the Bank of England was substantially correct.

Mr. Fallows promised me to get in touch with some attorneys in London who could at least tell us whether the existence of such money in the Bank of England was probable and, if so, what, if anything, could be done to prevent Anastasia's aunts from inheriting it. He added that if there were no money in the Bank of England the bank's officials would have no reason to conceal the fact of its absence. Only the presence—not the absence—of a deposit in a bank would require secrecy. Thus, the mere advice to us to take some measures for the protection of Anastasia's fortune would be a virtual admission of the fact of its existence.

Such, indeed, proved to be the advice Mr. Fallows promptly received from the London lawyers to whom he had written. In their opinion Grand Duchess Anastasia had to obtain as soon as possible a court order forbidding the Bank of England to turn her money over to her aunts.

The problem which now faced us was how to get in touch with the Grand Duchess. Carl Kelsey, who had proved as loyal a friend to Anastasia as he had to me,

volunteered even to secure a yacht and approach the Eccds' estate from the Sound, in the hope that Anastasia might some day come to the beach. But this seemed a rather slim hope, nor was it possible to predict how the Grand Duchess herself would react to such an effort to reach her. She was quite likely even to imagine that Mr. Kelsey had come to kidnap or perhaps to kill her.

And while we were wondering what to do, precious time was being lost. How precious the time was I did not fully realise in consequence of an error on Mrs. Derfelden's part. I had always remembered, of course, the fatal date—July 17th, 1918—of the Sovereigns' and my father's death. As late as on June 5th, 1928, I wrote to Mr. Fallows that Anastasia's money was to be turned over to her aunts on July 17th of that year. But Mrs. Derfelden began to assure me that the date of July 17th referred to the old Russian calendar which was thirteen days behind the modern calendar; in other words, that the Sovereigns had been killed on July 30th.

I had at the time no unquestionable source at hand through which to verify the matter. What Mrs. Derfelden's argument was I no longer remember, but it must have been weighty, for I finally accepted her opinion in spite of the fact that July 30th happened to be my birthday, and never before had I associated that anniversary with the date of the Ekaterinburg massacre.

But the lawyers in England were getting restive and demanding immediate action on our part. Then followed a swift exchange of letters and cables, until I

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was finally advised from London to cable a legal notice, signed by myself, to the effect that Grand Duchess Anastasia of Russia was still alive. So I did and the notice was served on the Bank of England and other banks on July 13th.

Having no certainty that such notice would suffice, and thinking that we still had until July 30th to complete our action, I decided, with Mr Fallows' consent, on the somewhat desperate step of writing to Grand Duchess Anastasia personally.

In my letter I reminded Anastasia of our conversation about her money and informed her that, as far as I had been able to ascertain, the money was still in the Bank of England, but was likely to be turned over to her aunt, Grand Duchess Xenia, on July 30th. I further informed Anastasia that to prevent her aunt from inheriting her fortune she had to obtain a court order which could be done without any trouble or publicity. I recommended Mr Fallows as the attorney who, having worked with me, was familiar with the situation and could easily attend to the matter. I advised her, however, to discuss the question first with Mr Leeds.

In order to make it clear to Princess Xenia that I was not trying to do anything behind her back, I wrote a separate letter to her also and attached to it a copy of my letter to the Grand Duchess. I mailed both letters in separate envelopes, by special delivery, on July 12th.

On the following day, which, significantly enough, happened to be Friday the 13th, Mrs Derfelden called up and asked me to come to her apartment at half past four in the afternoon.

I found Mrs. Derfelden in a state of agitation quite unusual to her.

"Xenia has received your letters and is furious," she informed me. "She asked me to tell you that she categorically refuses to help Anastasia obtain either a formal recognition of her identity or her money."

Such sudden frankness on Xenia's part astonished me not a little.

"But how can she refuse, after all her promises?" I asked. "What reasons does she give?"

"She says," Mrs. Derfelden explained, "that a formal acknowledgment of Anastasia would hurt badly the reputation of Grand Duchess Xenia and several other members of the Imperial Family. As for the money, she says that Anastasia does not need it because she, Princess Xenia, is going to support her for life."

"But how preposterous!" I protested. "So Grand Duchess Anastasia has to live for the rest of her life regarded by the world as an impostor, just because the formal acknowledgment of her identity would hurt the reputation of Grand Duchess Xenia! In other words, Grand Duchess Xenia, having attempted to deprive Anastasia of her just rights, must now be protected from the unpleasant consequences which might well follow. But Anastasia, who is utterly innocent of any wrongdoing, can go on living with the reputation of a fraud!"

"I know it is preposterous!" Mrs. Derfelden agreed.

"And the money?" I went on. "How nice of Princess Xenia, who has nothing more to offer than her position as the wife of a wealthy man, to guarantee Anastasia's maintenance for life and on that ground

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permit Anastasia to lose title to her own fortune! Why should Anastasia—the rightful heiress to a fortune of millions of dollars—live all her life on the charity of an American merchant? And what if Leeds himself should object to supporting her!”

“Exactly!” Mrs. Derfelden agreed once more. “But this isn’t all: Xenia also wants me to tell you that she has intercepted your letter to Anastasia and under no circumstances will she let her see it.¹ Also, that she plans to stop you legally from doing anything further to help Anastasia or hamper Grand Duchess Xenia in her plan for inheriting Anastasia’s money.”

“Stop me legally?” I wondered. “Just what does she mean by stopping me ‘legally’? If she means going to court, then it is certainly she, not I, who is likely to get into trouble.”

“That is precisely what I have pointed out to her,” Mrs. Derfelden said. “I told Xenia that she could do nothing to stop you because you are not doing anything illegal.”

“And what did she say to that?” I asked.

“She said: ‘It makes no difference. Botkin and Fallows have done enough mischief already, and I will stop them in one way or another,’” Mrs. Derfelden answered. “She also told me to obtain your answer to her message.”

“My answer is,” I said. “First, that I advise Princess Xenia to consult a good attorney, because otherwise she is likely to get herself into very serious trouble. In the matter of stopping my letter to Anastasia, for in-

¹ The original letter with seal unbroken and with proper cancellation by the Oyster Bay Post Office, intercepted by Princess Xenia, is in the possession of the author.

stance she has placed herself in a dangerous position. Interfering with the United States mail is a grave offence, you know. And if Xenia chooses to assume such an arrogant and inimical attitude towards me, I will take steps to prevent her getting away with this kind of thing.

"Moreover, as far as the general situation is concerned, we are now quite obviously faced with a clear attempt to deny Grand Duchess Anastasia her just rights. Such action has been taken systematically in the course of years by a large group of people, including the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga and M. Gillard. Now Princess Xenia joins them and openly states her aim in joining them—she wants me to stop all activity in defending the rights of Grand Duchess Anastasia and not to hamper Grand Duchess Xenia in her efforts to inherit Anastasia's fortune. Could anything make her purpose plainer than this?

"Now, I personally still refuse to believe that Princess Xenia acts in this manner because of any ulterior motives. She is not trying to get the money for herself, but for the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga. But it is a question whether she could convince any court of law of this; and whether she does or not, her participation in this case remains a fact admitted by herself. Not as an enemy, but as a friend, I advise Xenia not to get herself into that kind of mess; and I am sure that both her husband and her lawyer would be horrified to know what she is doing.

"The second thing I want you to tell her is that I beg her to reconsider her own position. I should infinitely prefer to cooperate with her, or at least remain on

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terms of friendly neutrality, rather than fight against her. I like her personally. I am very grateful to her for what she has done for the Grand Duchess so far. I hate to see her get into trouble because of her honesty in recognising Anastasia openly, when she could have disowned her as most of her relatives have done. But under no circumstances can I permit her, or anybody else, to deprive Anastasia of every chance of being reinstated in her rights. No matter what Princess Xenia, or even the whole world, has to say, I will continue to do my utmost to protect Anastasia against the machinations of those who oppose her. And one thing I am going to do right now is to follow the advice you gave me a month ago and publish as much about the whole matter as newspapers will dare to print!"

"You are perfectly right!" Mrs. Derfelden exclaimed, beaming. "I am very happy that you take this attitude, and you may be assured of my whole-hearted support in everything you do. I shall communicate your answer to Xenia right away and let you know later in the day what her reaction to it was."

Mrs. Derfelden telephoned me again the same evening, shortly after eleven o'clock. She spoke in a very excited voice.

"I have changed my mind on the situation," she said. "Now I must beg you to do nothing more in defence of Anastasia's rights!"

I could hardly believe my ears. "What made you change your mind?" I asked. "Have you talked to Xenia?"

Mrs. Derfelden did not answer.

"Have you talked to Xenia?" I asked again. "Have you given her my answer to her message?"

"All I can say," Mrs Derfelden answered enigmatically, "is that I beg you to withdraw from the case and do nothing more. Any further activity on your part will have very sad consequences for you personally."

"Considerations of that nature will never stop me from performing what I consider to be my duty," I assured Mrs Derfelden. "If it is to Xenia's threats that you refer, I assure you that they will not prevent me from defending Anastasia's rights"

"I know how you feel about it and I admire your courage," Mrs Derfelden said. "But in the present situation you simply cannot afford to do anything more. Do not forget that you have other duties. You have a wife and five children. You do not seem to realise the full extent of the danger you are threatened with. Were you at least certain you could save Anastasia's money, it might have been different. But you are not even certain of that. Under the circumstances, you are more than justified morally in not taking any further chances"

"Just exactly what am I threatened with?" I asked.

"Well, I personally am certain," Mrs Derfelden answered, "that unless you discontinue immediately all further activity in favour of Anastasia, something terrible will happen to you"

"Now this is getting to be interesting," I said. "And who is going to do it?"

"Do not forget that the two sons of Grand Duchess Xenia, the Princes Dimitriy and Rostislav, are in this country," Mrs Derfelden said.

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"So that's it?" I said. "What do those fellows want to do—summon me to a duel?"

"Oh, they themselves would never attack you," Mrs. Derfelden said. "But there are plenty of Russian monarchists who might do it!"

"I am not going to be intimidated by cowards of any sort," I retorted.

"Now please do think it over," Mrs. Derfelden continued to plead. "I can assure you, this is not a vain threat. I am utterly certain that, should you make one more move in defence of Anastasia, an attempt on your life will be made."

"I appreciate your solicitude," I said. "But my answer to all such princes and monarchists is to betake themselves to the devil. They shall not frighten me!"

On that our conversation ended, and I was not to see or talk to Mrs. Derfelden till many months later, for shortly after our conversation, her daughter, Mrs. Auchincloss, suffered a terrible accident. Arrived in Washington in an aeroplane, Mrs. Auchincloss went forward to talk to the pilot, and walked right into the path of the propeller which had not yet been stopped. The propeller hit her on the head twice before she fell to the ground. At first the doctors declared that she had not the slightest chance to survive. But survive by some miracle she did. Her convalescence, however, lasted many months, all of which Mrs. Derfelden, who is a most devoted mother, spent in her constant attendance.

Later I often wondered what turn events would have taken had the accident to Mrs. Auchincloss not occurred. Could Mrs. Derfelden have continued in her

rôle of mediator between Princess Xenia and myself, the struggle which was to follow might have proved less disastrous to everybody concerned.

Be that as it may, having received the threat against my life, I hastened to call on the general-manager of the syndicate which had published my articles on Anastasia a year previously, and asked him whether he was willing to publish more material on the same subject, mentioning in some way the financial aspect of the case.

The strange part of it was that in the meantime all newspaper and magazine editors had lost all interest in Anastasia, so that it was only by way of a personal favour and in fulfillment of his earlier promise that the general-manager agreed to accept my articles. Also, it was not a fortune he paid me for them but a very modest sum which barely enabled me to pay for the work done to protect Anastasia's fortune in the Bank of England.

On July 18th I was bewildered to find in the newspapers a statement given to the Associated Press by Mr. Leeds. In that statement Leeds, while expressing his conviction that his guest "Mrs. Tschaikovsky" was actually Grand Duchess Anastasia, declared:

"We are not trying to get any fortune for her and we are not trying to prove that she is the Grand Duchess. Nobody is interested in proving that."

Anastasia, herself, he added, wanted nothing but to "lead the normal life of any normal young woman."

At the same time Leeds admitted that he had received several reports about a fortune left by the Russian Emperor in England, one of the estimates giving as high a figure as \$80,000,000.

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Still imagining that Anastasia's money was to be turned over to her aunts on July 30th, and not the 17th, I took Leeds' statement as another of the steps Princess Xenia was taking to make matters easier for Grand Duchess Xenia. In consequence, I felt, and was advised by others including Mr. Fallows, that I could not let Leeds' statement go unchallenged. Accordingly, I issued a statement of my own, for the first time openly accusing the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga of trying to inherit Anastasia's moocy, and expressing my opinion that Mr. William B. Leeds had no authority to waive Anastasia's rights.

My statement appeared on July 19th. On July 20th I received a note from Princess Xenia asking me to come, at my earliest convenience, to Oyster Bay for a conference with herself and her husband. For a moment I thought that Xenia's note might be the result of my answer to Leeds' statement, but looking at the date discovered that the note had been delayed in transit, for Xenia had written it on July 18th.

I was as surprised by the invitation itself as by the polite tone of Xenia's note, so different from her last messages given to me by Mrs. Derfelden. Among other things, Xenia wrote me of her decision not to allow Anastasia to read my letter, giving as her reason her fear that my letter would have upset Anastasia to the point of affecting her health.

I answered Xenia immediately, accepting her invitation and asking her to set the date for our conference. I felt it necessary to register my protest against her action in intercepting my letter to Anastasia, but did so in a very polite tone. Finally, I thought it advisable

to give Xenia an amicable explanation of my statement of July 19th.

"It was painful for me," I wrote, in part, "to make a public accusation against members of the Imperial Family, but the responsibility for it lies entirely with them since they themselves started years ago to denounce publicly Grand Duchess Anastasia who is certainly much more representative of the Imperial Family than they are. Yet Grand Duchess Anastasia has never done anything wrong while her aunts . . . steadfastly refused to avail themselves of the many opportunities offered them to acknowledge Grand Duchess Anastasia without too great a loss to their prestige; nor have they paid any attention to the many warnings that the true situation could not remain hidden from the public at large much longer. . . .

"At the same time I wish nothing more but to be of every help and assistance to you provided you would make this possible for me by aiding Anastasia Nikolaevna to obtain justice and full rehabilitation. . . .

"May I also add that while the position I would have to take publicly towards you in regard to Anastasia Nikolaevna's case will wholly depend on your own attitude towards the matter, I will always preserve for you personally the feeling of sincerest admiration and it would be extremely distressing to me to be forced to stand in opposition to you in the eye of the public."

It seemed to me that I could be neither more straightforward nor obviously willing to effect the reconciliation Xenia's note appeared to suggest.

What puzzled me, however, was why Xenia had de-

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cided to write to me precisely on July 18th. Her final threat to me, ending all our negotiations, had been transmitted by Mrs. Derfelden on July 13th. At that time Xenia had clearly enough displayed her determination to have nothing more to do with me. On my part I had given no indication of the slightest desire to resume any negotiations with Princess Xenia. What then had given her the sudden wish to see me and made her assume so much pleasanter a tone towards me? Obviously, something must have happened between July 13th and July 18th.

And then it was that once more I asked myself the question whether Mrs. Derfelden had been right in insisting that the Imperial Family had perished on July 17th by the old, not the modern, calendar. I hastened to make a new search for some definite clue on the subject and finally found it. I had been right and Mrs. Derfelden wrong: it was by the modern calendar that the Sovereigns had been killed on July 17th. Hence, it was on July 17th—not July 30th—that Anastasia's aunts had to present their claim for her money to the Bank of England. In other words, they had already done so!

I gasped at the thought of it. Did they get it? But whether they got it or not, the reason for Xenia's change of attitude and her wish to see me became clear to me: on July 17th Anastasia's aunts had attempted *to get her money and had either failed or succeeded*. No doubt, they had informed Princess Xenia of the results of their move, by cable. Also, whatever those results were, the whole situation had obviously changed,

now that the crisis which I was still expecting in the near future had already passed.

The only question now was, what exactly had happened on July 17th? I could hardly force myself to wait for my meeting with the Leeds which, by common consent, had finally been set for the afternoon of July 22nd.

X

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ON JULY 22nd, upon my arrival at Oyster Bay, I was conducted to the boat house and on my way there had the pleasure of seeing one of those brave young princes who, according to Mrs. Derfelden, were planning my destruction, loitering in the garden. Needless to say, I made no attempt to approach him, and he in turn walked away rapidly.

I was greeted by both the Leeds with surprising friendliness, but noticed that Princess Xenia looked very nervous and Leeds himself rather ill at ease. He began to talk about some such subject as the weather, apparently not knowing how to start the discussion for which we had foregathered. At last he said:

"I saw your answer to my statement in the newspapers and, to tell you the truth, thought it not so hot."

"It wasn't meant to be 'hot,'" I smiled. "And I regretted the necessity of making it. But your own statement, you must admit, was quite improper. Neither you, nor anybody else, is authorised to waive the rights of Grand Duchess Anastasia to her formal recognition and fortune."

"I never meant to do that," Leeds said. "In fact, I never gave out any kind of statement. Some fellow called me up on the telephone and asked me a lot of questions, and, as far as I remember, I kept refusing

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to answer them and then they printed that so-called statement. And you at once jumped on me."

"Naturally, I did not know the circumstances," I said. "Even so, as long as you have done nothing to refute the statement attributed to you, it has, for all practical intent and purpose, become your statement. If you did not make it, you should have issued an immediate denial."

"I suppose so," Leeds said. "But, anyway, I didn't make it and I want to assure you right now that I never intended to waive Anastasia's rights. I may add that since the publication of your own statement every newspaper in town has called me up and asked whether I wanted to make any protest against it, and I have flatly refused to do so. This should prove my good faith to you."

"But how could you have made such an accusation against Grand Duchess Xenia?" Princess Xenia asked. "She doesn't even believe that there is any money in the Bank of England. And from your statement one might think that there exists some understanding between Auntie Xenia and ourselves, when in reality I haven't had a letter from her for months."

"It would seem to me," I said, "that the whole matter of our statements to the press was based on a series of misunderstandings. Personally, I am quite willing to express my regrets to you and regard the incident as closed. I should like, however, to be given the assurance that were I to write another letter to Grand Duchess Anastasia it will not be intercepted. Aside from anything else, nobody is allowed to interfere with the United States mail. Also, Grand Duchess Anastasia

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has every right to receive the letters addressed to her."

"You are quite right," Leeds said hastily. "It was a mistake and I am offering you my apologies. I promise that it won't happen again."

"I appreciate your attitude," I said, "and will gladly consider that incident also as closed."

"But you are very much mistaken if you imagine that Anastasia will ever answer your letters!" Xenia exclaimed. "She hates you! And why have you started writing about her in newspapers again? Can't you understand that any kind of publicity only hurts her case?"

"No, I certainly cannot understand that," I answered. "In fact, I now bitterly reproach myself for not having given her case all the publicity I could at the time when it was easy to do so. As long as no legal measures are taken to protect the Grand Duchess's interests publicity remains the only weapon with which I can defend her."

"And why do you imagine yourself called upon to defend her?" Xenia exclaimed again. "What I cannot understand is what you are doing all that for? What do you hope to gain? Anastasia hates you, I can assure you. She hates the very sound of your name! She will never agree to see you or have anything to do with you! And she does not, as you imagine, want to be acknowledged or given her money. All she wants is to be left in peace! But you think you can win her good grace by writing all those horrible things about her, when she hates nothing so much as being written about in newspapers!"

"Oh, let's not argue about that," Leeds said. "If Mr.

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Botkin wants to write about Anastasia in the papers nobody can prevent him from doing so. This is all beside the point. It isn't of publicity that you wanted to talk to him."

Xenia opened and closed her mouth several times, obviously not knowing how to begin.

"Yes, it is of something else I wanted to speak to you," she finally said, her voice rising in sharp, metallic tones. "What right did you have to do that dreadful thing?"

"What dreadful thing?" I asked, astonished.

"Oh, you know perfectly well what I am talking about!" Xenia began to shout. "What right did you have to tie up the money in the Bank of England?"

For a few seconds I stared at Xenia in silence, then burst into laughter. So my guess had proved correct! Something did happen between July 13th and July 18th! And how very happy I was to learn what had actually happened: my legal notice proved effective. Anastasia's fortune was saved—saved in spite of my stupid error in regard to the date of the Sovereigns' death! It was no accident, of course. The lawyers in England must have known the correct date all along. It was for this reason that they had pressed us for immediate action. Nor had that action come a bit too soon: it was on the 13th of July—only four days before the deadline—that my notice had been served on the bank.

My laughter increased Xenia's irritation further.

"The thing isn't funny—it is dreadful!" she exclaimed. "How did you dare to do it? And what position am I in now? How can I convince the Grand

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Duchesses Xenia and Olga that I had nothing to do with the tying up of the money?"

"Just a moment, Your Highness," I interrupted her. "What money are you talking about? I have heard it stated repeatedly, and you yourself said only a few minutes ago, that according to Grand Duchess Xenia there is no money in the Bank of England. Such being the case, what did my legal notice accomplish but tie up a lot of fresh air?"

Xenia looked at me, puzzled. But in a moment she flared up again:

"You can't get out of this with that kind of a joke!" she screamed. "You have tied up the money and now it is your duty to release it immediately!"

"But there is no money in the Bank of England," I repeated. "Still further, may I enquire how did you happen to learn that I have served a legal notice on the Bank of England? To begin with, nobody, not even Grand Duchess Xenia, could have learned about it except on July 17th, and then only if on that date she attempted to gain possession of Anastasia's fortune. But you claim that she does not believe in the existence of that fortune. Why then did she apply to the Bank of England on July 17th? But let us assume, that she went there just for fun. Why should she be at all perturbed about my legal notice which, in her belief, must have tied up nothing? Finally, you have told me that you have not heard from Grand Duchess Xenia for months. How, then, did you happen to know on July 18th—the date on which you requested me come to this conference—what Grand Duchess Xenia learned in London only on July 17th?"

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Poor Princess Xenia was by now beside herself with anger, and instead of answering my questions ~~began to~~ shout again that I had done a dreadful thing and now had to undo it. But Leeds interrupted her.

"Let's come down to brass tacks," he said. "Naturally the money must be there and we must have heard from Grand Duchess Xenia. But that's all neither here nor there. The question is, what are we going to do now?"

"There is exactly nothing I can do now," I answered. "I have served a notice on the Bank of England to the effect that Grand Duchess Anastasia of Russia happens to be alive. Needless to say, I will not withdraw that notice. But it would not change anything even if I were willing to withdraw it. You do not imagine that such an institution as the Bank of England would have accepted my notice at all, unless, in the first place, they felt pretty much convinced in the bank that I know what I am talking about, and, in the second place, had pretty good reasons of their own to believe Grand Duchess Anastasia to be alive. Do you think that anybody could walk into the Bank of England and tie up the money by declaring, let us say, that the Russian Emperor is still alive? My notice was obviously nothing but a formality which had enabled the Bank of England to act upon a knowledge of fact they already had but could not formally attribute to any source. The only way to get that money released is, either for Grand Duchess Xenia to prove in court that Grand Duchess Anastasia is an impostor, or else for Anastasia herself to prove that she is Grand Duchess Anastasia. What could be fairer than this?"

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"I admit that I do not see how, under the circumstances, you could be accused of any sinister machinations," Leeds chuckled. "At the same time, you know better than anybody that Grand Duchess Xenia cannot prove Anastasia to be an impostor, because she isn't; and Anastasia can prove nothing at all, because she has no money to start a litigation and I know of nobody who is going to finance her. Now, you must have realised all that when you served that notice of yours on the bank. You must have had some solution in mind. What is it?"

"A very simple one—compromise," I said. "For Anastasia the matter of financial inheritance is only incidental to the far greater problem of the formal recognition of her true identity. It is obvious that were Xenia and Olga allowed to inherit Anastasia's money they could not acknowledge her afterwards without confessing by their very acknowledgment the fact that they had deceived her, as well as the Bank of England. But there is certainly enough money in the bank to take care of the whole Imperial Family. The way to settle the dispute is for Xenia and Olga to acknowledge Anastasia, and for Anastasia to give them whatever part of her fortune they wish."

"Now you are talking!" Leeds exclaimed. "You are quite right—it's a clear case for a compromise."

"It is nothing of the kind!" Xenia intervened. "Anastasia is so mad at her aunts that she will never give them a cent!"

"And do you see any reason why Grand Duchess Anastasia should feel particularly fond of her aunts?" I laughed.

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"How can you keep laughing?" Xenia shouted, exasperated. "Don't you realise what you have done? Don't you understand that, formally acknowledged and given such a fortune, Anastasia will have every chance of becoming the Empress of Russia?"

That was an argument as new as it was bewildering. "Frankly, I have never thought of that," I said. "In my personal opinion there is almost no hope for the restoration of monarchy in Russia and none at all for the return of the Romanov dynasty to power."

"Do you imagine that you can make me believe that such is your true opinion?" Xenia asked. "Everybody knows that the restoration of monarchy in Russia is only a matter of time. And never will there be any dynasty except the Romanov dynasty! You know it as well as anybody. And do you care nothing about the welfare of the Russian people? Do you consider Anastasia fit to rule? Do you know that she threatens to hang all her relatives on lamp posts for what she calls their treason, the moment she becomes Empress?"

"No, I never knew anything of the sort," I confessed. "But, if such is her intention, members of the Imperial Family will not be faced with any new problem. All they will have to do is to continue in their present residences outside of Russia."

"You seem to think all those jokes of yours very funny!" Xenia retorted. "But members of the Imperial Family cannot indulge in silly jokes. It is the welfare of their people that they have to think about. Anastasia's régime would be worse than anything they've had in Russia since the revolution. It is for this reason that several members of the Imperial Family

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have decided not to acknowledge Anastasia and not to allow her to inherit her money!"

"I thought they refused to acknowledge her because they believed her to be an impostor," I smiled.

"Oh, stop it!" Xenia said. "Who believes her to be an impostor? Everybody knows that she is not an impostor! But members of the Imperial Family think first and above all of the Russian people whom they love. But much do *you* care about the Russian people. You want to place her on the throne and you will place her on the throne without caring a bit that you are giving Russia another Ivan the Terrible. She says herself that Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great are her ideal rulers!"

The debate was getting funnier by the second and once more I could not refrain from bursting into laughter.

"All this is news to me," I said. "But of one thing I can assure Your Highness: I never realised that I had the Russian throne in my pocket and could dispose of it according to the dictates of my fancy. But if such is the case I should never allow any member of the Romanov family to occupy it. In fact, I shouldn't let anybody have it, but sit on it myself."

"Now you are at least getting frank!" Xenia screamed. "But don't imagine that you have ever fooled anybody. We all knew it all along. All I can say is that I pity poor Anastasia. You will keep her on the throne just as long as it suits your convenience. As soon as you feel strong enough you will have her murdered and, as you yourself admit, seize the throne for yourself!"

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"My dear, my dear . . ." Leeds said beseechingly. While Xenia and I were quarrelling he had seated himself on a table in the corner of the room and was quietly sipping some liquid refreshment. "After all, we have a serious matter to discuss. Why don't you tell Mr. Botkin of the offer the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga want to make?"

Xenia looked around like a person emerging from a trance. "Oh, yes," she said after a while. "What they want to offer is this: if you allow them to inherit Anastasia's money and agree that she is not to be acknowledged formally, they will, in return, give Anastasia something out of that money and send her to some quiet retreat in Europe. You personally will also be taken care of."

"How generous!" I said. "They will inherit Anastasia's money and give her 'something.' However, that part of the offer is for Grand Duchess Anastasia to consider. As for the offer made to me personally, I refuse even to discuss it! And I repeat that even if I were the kind of crook capable of accepting such an offer, it would not change the situation in any way. The money is securely tied up and will remain tied up until released through a litigation."

"Your attitude is beyond my comprehension!" Xenia again began to shout. "How dare you oppose the whole Imperial Family? Don't you know what wonderful people they are? The Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga, for instance, whom you dare to accuse publicly of such awful things, are real saints, and everybody regards them as such! But if that means nothing to you, how do you propose to fight them, single-handed?"

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You think they have lost all power? Well, you are very much mistaken! As far as Anastasia's case is concerned, they have the full backing of King Georgel Do you propose to fight him too?"

"When I see someone being injured in broad daylight I call the police, no matter who the attackers happen to be," I said. "And I don't care if all the kings in the world are mixed up in the mess. All I want is to have the whole matter decided by a court of law; and laws are the same for everybody, kings included."

"In theory, maybe," Leeds observed. "But Xenia is right—you cannot fight the whole Imperial Family, single-handed. They do have power. It is also likely that the King wants Anastasia's aunts to inherit that money because he is tired of supporting them and all their Russian hangers-on. Another thing—you do not know Royalty as well as I do, And let me tell you I've found it includes the damndest bunch of crooks I ever saw . . ."

The last words had hardly escaped Leeds' lips when we froze in different attitudes of complete bewilderment. Xenia's face turned livid and, had it been possible to kill a person by merely looking at him, poor Leeds would have perished then and there under his wife's gaze. The moment he recovered sufficiently from the shock he himself had caused Leeds laid down his glass and hastened out of the room.

Left in an embarrassing *tête-à-tête* Xenia and I stared at each other in painful confusion. Suddenly her chin began to tremble and her eyes filled with tears.

"It is terrible! terrible!" she panted. "You do not
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realise yourself what mischief you have done. You must undo it . . . you must . . .”

But she could no longer control herself, covered her face with her handkerchief and ran out of the room, sobbing.

I remained in solitude and just as I began to wonder what I was supposed to do, Leeds stole back into the room, smiling rather apologetically.

“Ugh!” he sighed. “Have a drink? I think we both need it.”

I accepted with pleasure. For a while we talked of unrelated matters, then Leeds said:

“Look here, this way we are never going to get anywhere. Would you be willing to come some evening soon and talk matters over quietly with me and my lawyer?”

I assured him that I would be delighted to do so.

The proposed meeting took place a day or two later and resulted in a peaceful and orderly discussion of the situation.

Leeds’ main worry appeared to be the danger of finding himself charged with active participation in an attempt to defraud Anastasia. He reiterated his apologies for the interception of my letter to the Grand Duchess and, in spite of the storm over my legal notice, assured me that he was by no means convinced as to the presence of any money in the Bank of England. On my part, I tried to make him understand that nobody dreamed of charging him with anything.

As for the future, it appeared that we had reached a deadlock. Leeds told me that there was not the slightest chance of achieving a compromise between Anas-

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tasia and her aunts. He said that he fully understood the position I had taken and being as convinced of Anastasia's identity as I was myself—anybody doubting it "must be crazy," he declared—would have been glad to help me, were it not for the situation in his family. More than that, he had to warn me that were Anastasia to start any legal action she would have to leave Oyster Bay.

I explained to Leeds that for the present I did not propose even to write to Anastasia, let alone try to have her start any legal action. Now that I knew her fortune securely tied up, I saw no reason for haste. It was my plan to do nothing until the return from abroad of Richmaninoff and Miss Jennings—the only two persons of my acquaintance likely to offer Anastasia financial assistance. Having left this country only recently, neither Richmaninoff nor Miss Jennings were expected to come back for several months. In the meantime, it would be useless on my part to upset Anastasia, for she certainly could not start a litigation without first obtaining the necessary money.

We parted cordially, having promised to notify each other of any new development should one occur.

But I did not expect anything to happen for quite some time and was, therefore, extremely astonished when on July 31st Princess Xenia called me up on the telephone and said:

"Anastasia wants to see you. Can you come to-morrow afternoon?"

I went, of course, and was met by Princess Xenia who took me first to her drawing room and began to

assure me that it was she herself who had induced Anastasia to invite me.

"It is bad for her to be always angry at somebody," Xenia said with charming naïveté, "I have been trying to convince her all the time that she should forgive her enemies, and I am glad to see that my sermons begin to take effect."

She told me further that Anastasia had not summoned me for the purpose of discussing her affairs.

"Of course, I cannot prevent you from discussing them," Xenia added, "but I must warn you that if you convert her to your point of view you will have to find some other place for her."

I repeated to the Princess what I had already said to her husband.

"You can see yourself," I concluded, "that I have not the slightest reason for discussing her affairs with the Grand Duchess just now. And I certainly would not know where to find another place for her. My own house is very modest, barely furnished and full of noisy children. Nor do I know from month to month whether I shall be able to keep it. I am most anxious, therefore, for Anastasia Nikolaevna to remain here at least for another few months."

"Very well, then," Xenia said. "You may go to *Anastasia's room*. *I am not going with you*. But I shall be waiting for you here, because I want to know how she receives you."

I also wanted to know how the Grand Duchess was going to receive me and what had prompted her to summon me. It was not without some nervousness that I knocked at her door.

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"Come in!" Anastasia called.

I opened the door and saw *her* standing in the middle of the room, looking even more nervous than I was myself.

"I am so happy to see Your Imperial Highness again," I said.

She smiled timidly, gave me her hand to kiss and after some hesitation said :

"I have received a letter from Europe which annoyed me very much. Will you please read it and tell me what you think of it."

The letter proved to be from one Felix Dassel, a former Russian officer who during the war had stayed for a while in the hospital of which Anastasia was a patroness. Dassel had visited the Grand Duchess in Seon, in September 1927, recognised her and published several articles about her in German newspapers.

Now Dassel wrote to Anastasia that his open acknowledgment of her had caused him many unpleasantnesses, that passing through the territory of Hessen-Darmstadt he had been put in jail and in consequence lost his job and was now in very difficult circumstances.

I told the Grand Duchess that while everything Dassel wrote was, no doubt, true, I did not regard it as proper for him to bother her. She answered that the question was not whether Dassel should have written in that manner, but whether the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt *had any right to arrest people for the only reason that they had acknowledged her.*

"I am beginning to think that the only way for me to stop that persecution of myself and my friends is by

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going to court," Anastasia said. "All rights and justice have been denied me long enough." She paused, then asked. "And what about the money in the Bank of England? Has anything been done to prevent my aunts from getting it? This is already the first of August and they were to get it in July."

I was quite taken aback by this unexpected turn of our conversation.

"I am happy to report," I answered, "that your aunts have been prevented from obtaining your money."

Anastasia's face lighted with a happy and astonished smile. "By whom?" she asked.

"By me," I said.

"By you?" she exclaimed. "But Xenia told me that you had turned against me! I asked her several times to invite you, but she said that you refused to have anything to do with me—that you had become my enemy!"

I could not conceal my indignation. "This is really too much!" I exclaimed. "But how could you have believed her? And to think that all the while I was trying to get in touch with you Xenia kept telling me that you hated me and would never agree to receive me!"

"How did she dare! How could she!" Anastasia exclaimed in her turn.

In spite of my anger I was unable not to see the humour of the situation and began to laugh. "This is a perfect farce," I said. "And now that everything has ended so happily—your money is safe and we can see each other again—let us not spoil our blood with anger. Now the whole thing seems really quite funny to me."

Anastasia was not the person to resist laughter and,

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having begun to laugh, she forgot both her anger and her nervousness. At once she became her charming and lovable self. She wanted, however, to know every thing that had happened since our enforced separation and I made a detailed report to her, ending with the conversation I had just had with Xenia.

The Grand Duchess listened to me attentively, interrupting me from time to time with some indignant exclamation or comment, and when I finished asked

"What do you advise me to do?"

"Nothing for the present," I said. "The trouble is that there is nothing you can do until you have the money to start the litigation. Let us wait until Rachmaninoff and Miss Jennings return from Europe."

Anastasia did not seem very enthusiastic about my advice, but admitted its wisdom and agreed to follow it.

"I only regret that it is obviously no longer possible for us to be frank with Xenia," I said. "But in view of all the tricks she has played on us, I think we have the moral right to tell her nothing of your plans, at least for the present."

"Of course, we ought not to tell her anything!" Anastasia exclaimed.

"She is waiting for me downstairs, you know," I said. "I shall tell her that we had just a pleasant and quite inconsequential chat about nothing."

"Certainly. I shall tell her the same thing," Anastasia said.

"And now I had better go so as not to arouse Xenia's suspicions by staying too long," I said. "If I may, I shall call on Your Imperial Highness again in a week

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or so; and in the meantime do not be nervous and please do not quarrel with Xenia."

"I have already quarrelled with her," Anastasia smiled naughtily. "It was only because I did quarrel with her that she finally agreed to let me see you."

"But that was not a serious quarrel," I said, "and you can make up with her easily. Xenia seems only too anxious to keep you here, if only for the reason that as long as you are here you cannot begin your litigation. I realise that it will be difficult for you to be nice to her, but after all you are still enjoying her hospitality and at least ought to treat her politely while you remain in her house."

"You are right, of course," Anastasia agreed. "I will not quarrel with her, but do come to see me again as soon as you can."

On that we parted, Anastasia now looking quite calm, almost cheerful. Downstairs Princess Xenia awaited me.

"Well, how did she receive you?" she asked.

"Oh, quite nicely," I said.

"What did you talk about?"

"Of nothing in particular—the weather, the parakeets . . .," I improvised.

Xenia cast at me a questioning look which made me think that I was not a very successful liar.

"She has been rather restless of late," Xenia observed, continuing to watch me attentively. "We even had a little quarrel."

"I am sorry to hear that," I said. "But the Grand Duchess seems in a rather good mood now. I do hope she will not quarrel with you again."

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I returned home, very pleased to have at last seen Anastasia and received her whole-hearted approval of all my actions on her behalf. In general, it seemed to me, the situation was gradually clearing up. The whole plan of Anastasia's aunts had failed miserably; so had Princess Xenia's plans. Now one could hope again that everything was going to end well. I felt pretty certain that both Rachmaninoff and Miss Jennings would be glad to help the Grand Duchess personally and thus enable her to leave the Leeds. Whether they would finance her litigation was a question, but there had to be some way of finding money for a litigation which in case of victory would give Anastasia a fortune. And in the meantime everybody could live in peace, provided, of course, that the Grand Duchess would refrain from further quarrels with Xenia.

That latter hope was shattered soon enough. It was on the following day that Xenia called me up again and said:

"Anastasia really must be crazy: she wants to see you to-morrow! Can you come?"

I sighed, but promised to come.

Once more I was met by Xenia. But this time she looked so troubled that I felt sorry for her.

"I don't know what is the matter with Anastasia," she said. "But she no longer seems to trust me and keeps quarrelling with me all the time. I should not be surprised if she starts discussing her affairs with you, and I must repeat that if she decides to establish her identity and obtain her money through the courts, she must leave this house. Tell her that!"

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I expected to find the Grand Duchess in a very bad mood, but she greeted me quite cheerfully, if a little guiltily

"I know, I haven't kept my word, but I couldn't," she said the moment I attempted to reproach her for quarrelling with Xenia. "Last time I didn't tell you even a small part of my own experiences with Xenia. I really cannot understand how such a young woman can be so false. Do you know, for instance, that on the 18th of July she was sitting here in my room, kneeling before me, kissing me and assuring me with tears in her eyes that I had nothing to worry about, that she would do everything for me, obtain my recognition and never allow my aunts to inherit my money? On the 18th of July—the very day on which she had made such a scene before you because you had saved my money from my aunts! How do you want me to be nice to such a person? You know, I can never pretend."

Yes, I knew that Anastasia, accused by her enemies and suspected by so many of being a crafty impostor cleverly playing the rôle of a Grand Duchess, could never play any rôle, could never hide a single one of her thoughts or emotions. She had always been like that. "I hate sneaks," she had told me once in her childhood. She did hate sneaks, had never been deceitful herself and never could be a sneak. Nor was I myself particularly good at it, or even as a diplomat, I feared. I had to admit that it had been an altogether foolish idea on my part that such a pair as Grand Duchess Anastasia and I could successfully compete with Princess Xenia.

But what was I to do with the Grand Duchess? Take

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her to my own house with all its noise and lack of comfort and curious neighbours? How would she feel in such surroundings after all the luxury of Oyster Bay? How was I going to take proper care of her, buy her the right kind of food, pay for such medical services as she might require? On top of this was the problem of her personal safety. My house was quite unprotected and my address known to everybody.

"I can see that it is impossible for you to remain here much longer," I said, after telling Anastasia of all my misgivings. "But could you not try and live in peace with Xenia, if only for another two or three weeks? You needn't worry—I will not leave you unprotected, no matter when you leave Oyster Bay, but I want you to be properly taken care of and shall immediately ask Rachmaninoff's personal secretary to get in touch with him. I am sure he will come to your aid, but it might take two or three weeks to get an answer from him."

"All right," the Grand Duchess said. "I will do my best not to quarrel, but do hurry with your preparations and take me away from here as soon as you possibly can. With all I now know I do not even feel safe in this house."

"You oughtn't to start exaggerating things in this manner," I admonished her. "You are quite safe personally. Xenia may not have been fair but I still think that she is sincerely fond of you. It is simply that she got mixed up with your aunts and now apparently doesn't know which way to turn."

"Still, I shall be terribly nervous as long as I have to remain here," Anastasia said.

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"You needn't be nervous, because I am watching over you," I assured her. "But do try to be a little more patient."

"I will try," Anastasia said. But this time I felt pretty certain that her efforts were not likely to prove successful.

On my way out of the house I was again stopped by Xenia.

"What's going on? What did she say? Why did she lose confidence in me?" she began to question me excitedly.

I stared at her, puzzled. Xenia asking *me* why Anastasia had lost confidence in her! Why, indeed? I could no longer lie to her, but was equally unable to tell her the truth.

"The situation is obviously a very painful one," I said. "But I regret that I cannot discuss it right now with Your Highness. All I can say is that the Grand Duchess has promised me to try not to quarrel with you any more."

"Before leaving could you go down to the boat house where my husband is waiting for you?" Xenia asked.

To the boat house I went and found Leeds there with a bottle in front of him. "Have a drink," he said. I nodded, and we quickly established an atmosphere of cordiality. For a while Leeds questioned me again on the situation in the Bank of England and reiterated his assurances that he quite understood my point of view and was sorry to be unable to help me. Then with a deep sigh he said:

"This is certainly a pretty kettle of fish."

To this I agreed.

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"The trouble is," Leeds went on, "that I only tried to be of help to everybody, but all I get in return is kicks on both shins. I really don't know what to do. You mustn't think that I am not interested in safeguarding Anastasia's rights. I really have come to be very fond of her. She is a most charming person; that is, until she starts quarrelling with Xenia. Not that Xenia is any more pleasant when she quarrels. The two are quite obviously cousins. You cannot imagine what has been going on here for the last two days. I am thinking of spreading nets on the tree tops around the house to prevent our ladies from killing themselves when they start jumping out of the windows."

"I believe I can pretty well imagine your difficulties, but my own situation is hardly better," I said. "I wish I could be of help to you, in some way, but there doesn't seem to be anything I can do."

"Same here," Leeds sighed. "Oh, what's the use? Let's have another!"

When I finally began to take leave of him Leeds said:

"Still, your position is better than mine. You come here, have all the fun of watching this circus, and then go back to a peaceful home. But I have to stay here with our charming ladies."

"I am afraid I am no longer quite able to see the fun in it," I laughed. "But in the meantime let's hope that some peaceful solution will be found eventually."

However, I no longer had any such hope, nor was I at all astonished when on August 6th Leeds telephoned me and asked me to come again to his boat house at 6 o'clock of the same day.

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"What now?" I wondered.

I reached the boat house at the time specified, but found the place empty. I waited for a while and was beginning to think of leaving when Princess Xenia came in. She was quite surprised to see me.

"I didn't know you were here," she said.

"Your husband asked me to be here at six," I explained.

"That's funny," she said. "And he asked me to be here at six, but he did not tell me that he was expecting you."

We looked at each other, both equally puzzled, but in a moment the telephone began to ring. It proved to be Leeds, who engaged his wife in a lengthy conversation.

"He apologises for not being able to come," Xenia said, hanging up the receiver. "And he wants me to talk to you in his place. The situation has become quite intolerable. Anastasia and I can no longer remain under one roof. You will have to take care of her, because you seem to be the only person she trusts. But we want to repeat our offer: Take Anastasia to some secluded spot in Europe and give up the struggle for her formal recognition. If you will do so, we shall support Anastasia for life and gladly pay all your expenses. Otherwise, you must take her away from here within forty-eight hours!"

Poor Xenia looked so tired and miserable that I could no longer feel the slightest anger against her. Indeed, I wanted nothing so much as to put her head on my shoulder and let her cry like the offended little child she seemed at the moment.

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It was, therefore, without a trace of anger or bitterness that I explained to Xenia the complete impossibility of my even contemplating her offer. Under no circumstances would I personally have anything to do with any such arrangement. As to Anastasia's own choice in the matter, she alone should make it. And were she to reject Xenia's ultimatum—as I felt pretty certain that she would—it would become my duty to care for her, although I had no idea how I could do it.

Xenia began to argue and for a while grew once more quite excited.

"You cannot imagine what harm you have done!" she said to me. "Had you not interfered, Anastasia's aunts would have obtained the money without any fuss and thereafter would have looked after Anastasia for the rest of her days, because they are not at all the monsters you seem to imagine them, but very kind-hearted women. Everything was going so well, my correspondence with Grand Duchess Xenia was of the friendliest nature, and then you had to come with your legal notice and in one day ruin my work of six months."

I listened, incredulous. Here she was, that Byzantine Princess, suddenly acknowledging with childish naïveté what to anyone else would be plain duplicity—nay, boasting about it, reproaching me for having interfered with the success of her clandestine operations. And now I wondered whether such a woman could actually be accused of duplicity? Certainly she was not in the least aware of having done anything wrong. In fact, she was beatifically certain of having been completely right and correct in all her actions. How

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could such a paradoxical person be classified? To me in one way only—she was a Romanov.

And now that she no longer pretended not to have maintained any correspondence with Anastasia's aunts, I said to her:

"But do tell me this: you are completely convinced of Anastasia's identity; you have had all along such a friendly correspondence with Grand Duchess Xenia; you are constantly visited by two of Grand Duchess Xenia's sons. How can it be then that Grand Duchess Xenia *will not admit at least the possibility that Anastasia is indeed her niece?*"

"Of course, she fully admits it!" Xenia exclaimed. "She doesn't merely admit it—she knows it!"

"And knowing Anastasia to be her niece," I went on, "Grand Duchess Xenia tries, nevertheless, to inherit Anastasia's money. How, then, can you maintain that she is such a good person?"

"Not a good person?" Xenia flared up. "If the Imperial Family has decided that Grand Duchess Anastasia is not fit to be formally acknowledged and be given all that money, and that it is Grand Duchess Xenia who should inherit it, what is there unfair about Xenia's actions? Who has the right to question the decision of the Imperial Family?"

"And should Anastasia go to court, her relatives who know her to be Anastasia, will testify that she is an impostor?"

"Naturally!" Princess Xenia said.

Yes, it was quite natural, I reflected. Who, indeed, had the right to question the decisions of the Imperial Family? Had they not ruled Russia for 300 years and

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in the course of those 300 years taken and enforced many a decision as lofty ethically as their present decision to disown Grand Duchess Anastasia? Were they never ashamed of their own ruthlessness, their greed? Of course not. On the contrary they deemed themselves saints. They never did anything from selfish motives. It was of the welfare of their beloved Russian people that they always thought. Had not Princess Xenia herself told me, during our first quarrel, that in the opinion of the Imperial Family Anastasia, formally acknowledged and given her money, would be likely to become the Empress of Russia; and that they did not regard her as fit to rule?

How was Anastasia going to become the Empress of Russia? But how was Grand Duke Cyril going to become Emperor of Russia? How was Grand Duke Nicholas going to become Dictator of Russia? That little question "how?" never seemed to interest them. They just took it for granted that one of them was going to become the ruler of Russia. The only problem was which of them was most fit to rule.

Even on that problem they never seemed able to reach a unanimous decision. But once in a while they did decide that one or another of the candidates was not fit to rule. Thus Anastasia was not fit to rule because she was angry at the rest of them and promised to hang them all. And, of course, their beloved Russian people would suffer agonies watching them being hanged. And, therefore—not because they really wanted their money, nor yet objected to being hanged, no, not at all, but only because of their great love for the Russian people—Anastasia had to be denounced as

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an impostor, persecuted, prevented from securing her fortune . . .

What a nightmarish phantasmagoria all this was! Yet, to Princess Xenia, and no doubt to all her relatives, that delirious nonsense was reality and people like myself, who dared to question the decisions of the Imperial Family, incomprehensible and dreadful creatures.

"All I can do," I finally said to Xenia, "is to transmit your ultimatum to Grand Duchess Anastasia and, if she rejects it, come for her in forty-eight hours."

"Very well," Xenia agreed. "You may go and talk to her now."

She did not follow me to the house, but took leave of me in the garden. We parted sorrowfully, yet amiably. Xenia even tried to smile and told me how glad she was to have learned from Mrs. Derfelden that I was going to have a novel published.

My conversation with Grand Duchess Anastasia proved a short one. As soon as she heard Xenia's ultimatum, she straightened herself and said:

"Please be here in forty-eight hours."

I told her that the safest place I could take her was the apartment in the city of my friend, John R. Colter, who was deeply and sincerely devoted to her and *would rather die than let the slightest harm come to her*. The only trouble was that Colter's financial circumstances were hardly better than my own and he lived with his wife in a very modest studio apartment on Lexington Avenue.

"Don't worry about that," Anastasia said. "Where have I not lived since my escape from Russia? As

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long as I am among friends whom I can trust I shall feel comfortable anywhere Only take me away from her!"

Had she been an impostor, I mused, Anastasia could well be said to have achieved a unique success After fighting her desperately for years, the sisters of the Emperor had at last acknowledged their defeat and were begging for peace, offering her a pension for life if she would only refrain from pressing her claims Could any impostor have wanted more than to be supported for life by the Imperial Family?

But then Grand Duchess Anastasia did not happen to be an impostor, and without a moment's thought rejected that offer with indignation She was leaving, penniless, the luxury of a millionaire's home, the protection of an Imperial Princess, and facing fearlessly an unknown future, because she could not, under any circumstances be untrue to herself and deny her own identity

And, knowing her as I did, I knew also that she was determined to preserve her own identity, not because it happened to be associated with an exalted title and the right to a large fortune, but simply because it was her own identity Anastasia was what she was and would never agree to pretend that she was anything but her own self That she happened to be also a Grand Duchess was but an accident of fate She would have acted no differently had she been born not in an Emperor's palace but in a peasant's hut

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JOHN R. COLTER, to whose apartment I had decided to take Grand Duchess Anastasia, was the former acting general manager of the syndicate which had published my articles about the Grand Duchess. An old and trusted friend of mine, he had always been extremely interested in the case. Had he been allowed to start the newspaper campaign he had planned, the struggle for Anastasia's formal recognition would, undoubtedly, have proved much more successful. The unwillingness on the part of the owners of the syndicate to back John Colter in his plans on Anastasia's behalf was one of the reasons why he had resigned his post. His article on Anastasia, published, if I remember correctly, in the *Nation*, was by far the best and most convincing article on the subject ever to appear in print.

John Colter's second wife, Ann Nooney, was an artist, a woman of unusual intelligence and as devoted to Anastasia as John was himself. The attitude of the Colters towards the Grand Duchess was the more touching because they had never seen her, and had embraced her cause, moved solely by a passion for justice.

I knew, therefore, that with the Colters Anastasia would be utterly safe and given all possible attention. The only trouble was that they were very poor; also, their small apartment on Lexington Avenue, in the fif-

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ties, was by no means an ideal place at the height of the August heat.

Neither the Colters nor I having a car, or knowing how to drive one, I appealed to Mr. Fallows who very kindly volunteered to transport the Grand Duchess from Oyster Bay to the city. On the morning of August 8th I telephoned Princess Xenia that I expected to reach Oyster Bay about 1 o'clock.

When we arrived, Mr. Fallows remained in the car and I went into the house alone. Much to my astonishment, Princess Xenia began to insist that I should, first of all, eat, although she herself had already finished her luncheon. I went out to tell Mr. Fallows that my visit would apparently last for some time and he decided to drive away and return about 3 o'clock.

Princess Xenia took me to the dining-room where luncheon for me alone had already been served. I felt extremely touched by such solicitude. Xenia seated herself at the table and engaged me in friendliest conversation. And while we talked I kept wondering why Xenia and I ever had to quarrel, why we could not always be so friendly? Could she not understand that I had always wanted to help and protect her as loyally as Grand Duchess Anastasia herself? Even her unwillingness to take any part in the struggle for Anastasia's rehabilitation did not necessarily have to cause any enmity between us. Nothing more would Xenia have had to do than be honest and truthful with me and tell me frankly what her position was and how far she could go in assisting the Grand Duchess.

About 3 o'clock Mr. Fallows drove up to the house and I told Xenia that it was time for me to take the

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Grand Duchess to the city. She astonished me by saying:

"Go and talk to her first. Perhaps she has changed her mind and would rather go abroad on the terms I have offered."

I agreed, but first went out to the porch to ask Mr. Fallows to wait for me a little longer. Xenia followed me. I introduced Mr. Fallows to her and she invited him into the drawing-room. I went upstairs. When I entered the Grand Duchess's room I saw that she was ready to leave immediately—her meagre belongings all neatly packed and even her now famous parrakeets already locked up in their cage.

She asked me with some impatience why I had come so late, when in the morning she had been given my message that I expected to call on her at 1 o'clock. I told her of the luncheon Xenia had so thoughtfully served me and of my conversation with her, ending with Xenia's renewal of the offer to send her abroad.

"What shall I tell her?" I asked in conclusion.

"Tell her," Anastasia said, her eyes flashing with anger, "that I am leaving her house immediately!"

I went downstairs where I found Xenia and Mr. Fallows engaged in what looked like a very amicable conversation.

"What did she say?" Xenia exclaimed eagerly.

"The Grand Duchess has decided to leave immediately," I reported.

Xenia's face brightened with a happy smile and she said: "Oh, then she did decide to go to Europe, after all? I am so glad . . ."

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"No, no," I interrupted her. "The Grand Duchess has decided to leave this house immediately."

Xenia's smile instantly vanished. Suddenly she burst into tears and ran upstairs. I followed her at some distance. She ran into her room and locked the door after her. Passing the door, I heard her sob.

All servants having disappeared as if by magic, I took the Grand Duchess's luggage to the car, then escorted the Grand Duchess herself. As we went out on the front porch I saw Mr. Fallows talking in the garden with Mr. Leeds. They noticed us and Mr. Leeds hurried away, while Mr. Fallows came over to greet Anastasia. We helped her into the car and drove off.

Something infinitely pathetic there was in that quiet departure of the unfortunate Anastasia from the place which I had hoped to see her leave only as an acknowledged Grand Duchess. Now, she was abandoning all hope of an early recognition by her Aunts, to face anew a future unknown and frightening.

Xenia's final outburst of grief had also affected me deeply, even though I could not understand whether it had been caused by a sudden return of her affections for Anastasia, or, on the contrary her anger at the final collapse of all her efforts. Be that as it may, I myself felt on the verge of tears and, too, Mr. Fallows appeared quite upset.

For a while we rode along in oppressive silence, each absorbed in thought. It was Anastasia herself, who finally brought us out of our stupor by starting some insignificant but pleasant conversation. After a while she asked Mr. Fallows whether he would

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mind driving a little faster. Mr. Fallows looked at me questioningly. I nodded and began to laugh, because everybody who had ever taken Anastasia for a drive in an automobile had gone through the same experience. So frail and sickly she looked that every person who drove her for the first time always started at a snail's pace, afraid to give her the slightest jolt or scare. Nobody ever suspected that Anastasia had always been and still remained a dare-devil at heart and was, besides, like her father, the late Emperor, particularly fond of speeding.

Because of the Emperor's love for fast driving all chauffeurs at the Imperial Court were trained to drive at a fantastic speed and could never be induced to drive slowly. My father, who disliked doing anything which ordinary mortals were not allowed to do, always felt terribly embarrassed when at the approach of our car every policeman would first seize his notebook to write down the license number and then, seeing the crown on the plate, hide his book and stand at attention. Often enough we returned from a ride to find some poor sparrow or other small bird smashed against the radiator.

We children, having had none of father's scruples about annoying ordinary mortals, found it very amusing to be always travelling at 60 and 70 miles an hour; even so, I personally had never developed into the sort of speed maniac Grand Duchess Anastasia was. To her slow driving was simply unendurable.

And so she kept asking Mr. Fallows to drive faster and faster, until we were making over 60 miles, in broad daylight, on the road to New York City. Naturally, before long a motorcycled policeman gave chase

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and Anastasia became terribly excited. No doubt, it was Xenia—she said—who had sent the police after us. I tried in vain to convince her that Xenia, even though a Princess of the Imperial Family, had no such powers in the United States and that she, Anastasia, had herself attracted upon us the attention of the police by insisting on such speed.

In the meantime Mr. Fallows had stopped and started negotiating with the policeman. What Mr. Fallows told him I do not know, but the policeman became at once very polite and let us proceed, much to Anastasia's relief.

We reached Colter's apartment without further misadventures, although Anastasia had had to reconcile herself to the observance of the speed limit.

The Colters gave the Grand Duchess a touching reception and I was delighted to see that they made a very good impression on her. But when the problem of the dinner arose we discovered that we had less than a dollar among us. Even so Ann managed to contrive a very presentable supper.

In the meantime Grand Duchess Anastasia, now impatient to start the legal fight for her recognition, began to discuss the matter with Mr. Fallows. He too made a very good impression on her and she wanted to retain him at once. Knowing, however, what a new outburst of anger and accusations against everybody concerned the retaining of a lawyer by Anastasia would call forth, I advised both her and Mr. Fallows to submit the draft of his retainer to Mr. Leeds for approval. Both agreed, and Mr. Leeds, in his turn, showed the retainer to his lawyer. The latter found the terms offered by Mr. Fal-

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lows extremely fair, but suggested a few minor changes to which Mr. Fallows also agreed at once. It was only then that I advised the Grand Duchess to sign the retainer, which she did.

At the time of its signing a curious incident took place. Anastasia was in a very nervous mood on that day. While eager to start the legal fight for her rehabilitation, she felt, nevertheless, that by so doing she definitely put an end to every possibility of an ultimate reconciliation with her family.

The retainer, naturally, had to be signed in English, and it was but very seldom that the Grand Duchesses in their childhood and youth had to sign their names in Latin characters. Since her rescue, Anastasia had, in the course of years, written less than a dozen brief notes and probably signed her name not many more times than that. Now, before signing the retainer, she suddenly turned to me and with despair in her voice said in German:

"I am afraid I have forgotten how to sign *my* name in Latin characters."

"Oh, no, you haven't," I assured her. "You are simply nervous. Just relax a little and your signature will come out all by itself, without any thought on your part."

She took my advice, calmed down and swiftly wrote "Anastasi . . ." then stopped, looked at me and asked:

"What is the last letter in *my* name in Latin characters? In Russian it ends with the letter 'yah' which does not exist in the Latin alphabet."

The Grand Duchess was quite right.

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"In English your name ends simply with an 'a,'" I said

"Never!" Anastasia exclaimed "Never did my name, written in any characters, end with an 'a'!"

"Of course it does—in English," I said "What other letter can your name end with, if not an 'a'?"

"It does not end with an 'a,'" the Grand Duchess said irritably "I am surprised that you do not even remember how my name is spelled And now you get me all mixed up and I can remember nothing more!"

I was quite upset by the whole performance which, to make it worse, was taking place in the presence of Mr Fallows and a Notary The two were eyeing us suspiciously, unable to understand what we were saying to each other, but realising, of course, that Anastasia did not know how to sign her own name What food for her enemies, what excellent subject for half a dozen articles by the able M Gillard, I thought, exasperated

"Please," I begged Anastasia, "put an 'a' at the end of your name, whether it is right or wrong These gentlemen are waiting, and you have to complete your signature in some way"

"I will not!" Anastasia retorted "My name does not end with an 'a' Let it stay as it is!"

And she handed the retainer to the Notary, while I mumbled some embarrassed explanations that the Grand Duchess was very nervous and for reasons to me unknown refused to complete her signature Mr Fallows and the Notary exchanged meaningful glances but had to witness the retainer with its absurd signature "Anastasi"

The thing baffled me completely How could the

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name Anastasia end if not with an "a"? And whether she agreed with it or not, why could not the Grand Duchess have spared me—and herself—all that embarrassment and taken my word for it? And how, I wondered, had she signed her name when she was in Germany? The name "Anastasia" is spelled in German in exactly the same way as in English. How else could it be spelled in any language, except the Russian?

On the following day the Grand Duchess gave me one of those mischievous smiles which presaged a long siege of teasing, and said:

"Oh, what a clever person you are. There is nothing you do not know, is there? And you have never been wounded in the head, as I have. And so devoted you are to me, yet you do not even know how to spell my name. Fie on you."

"But, of course, I know how to spell your name," I protested, "I still insist . . ."

"Better don't insist," Anastasia interrupted me, laughing. "Spelling my name with an 'a' at the end! Aren't you ashamed? Would you perhaps spell my sister Marie's name also with an 'a' at the end?"

Oh, Heavens, I thought, what a blunder I had committed! Yes, indeed—when signing their names in Latin characters Marie and Anastasia had never written "Maria" and "Anastasia" but always "Marie" and "Anastasic." Even so, I tried to defend myself.

"I must apologise," I said. "You are quite right. You did sign your name with an 'c' at the end, and it was most stupid of me to have forgotten it. But I still fail to see why you could not have signed that paper

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yesterday in the English manner. 'After all, we are in an English speaking country . . .'

"Oh, how silly," Anastasia interrupted me again. "Don't you even know that the spelling of our names in Latin characters had been officially established on the basis of the French spelling, so that outside of Russia—no matter what country I am in—my name is 'Anastasic' and not 'Anastasia'?"

Yes, once more the Grand Duchess was perfectly right, and I should have known—had known, in fact—what she was now telling me, but had forgotten it. Which, incidentally, offered an additional example of the virtual impossibility of playing another person's rôle. Few people now living possessed as intimate a knowledge of the Russian Court as I did. But, obviously enough, I could not have impersonated a member of the Sovereign's family, without being proved an impostor in ten minutes' time.

According to M. Gillard, Grand Duchess Anastasia had acquired her knowledge of the affairs of the Imperial Family from books. As a matter of fact, Anastasia hardly had read as many as half a dozen books from the very time of her rescue. But I had read hundreds of them. Now I even remembered that I had in my possession a book with a photograph of Anastasia signed in French "Anastasic." Yet I had completely forgotten that her name could be spelled in that manner.

Still further, ordinary mortals always changed the spelling, often the very pronunciation of their names in accordance with the language of the country they happened to be in. It was done even in passports. Thus,

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my own wife's first name according to the Russian text of her passport was "Nadejda," but according to the French text of the same passport was "Nadine." In English she never knew which spelling, or rather which name, to use, and among our American friends some called her "Nadejda" and others "Nadine." Where would an impostor have found that rule that members of the Imperial Family could spell their first names according to the French spelling only? The very thought of looking for any such rule would never have entered an impostor's mind.

A day or two after the Grand Duchess's departure from Oyster Bay the Richards offered to support her for a month or six weeks. I was the more surprised and touched because the Richards, like Rachmaninoff, could never become quite convinced that "Mrs. Tschai-kovsky" was actually Grand Duchess Anastasia. But they felt that it was impossible to keep Anastasia in the city during the August heat and offered to rent two rooms for her in the Garden City Hotel which was a quiet and comfortable place with a lovely garden and located not far from my house in Hempstead.

The problem was, however, how to preserve the secret of Anastasia's identity and also obtain for me the permission from the hotel's management to visit Anastasia in her room.

"Suppose we make her your sister," Gus Richard suggested. "And register her under some assumed and inconspicuous name—Mrs. Anderson, let us say."

It seemed an excellent idea. Better still, Hetty Richard's former governess, a delightful French

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woman, Mme. Schiverée by name, volunteered to stay with Anastasia during the first two or three weeks.

When I informed the Grand Duchess of the Richards' offer she accepted it gratefully, and it was again Mr. Fallows who drove us out to Garden City.

Anastasia was very much pleased with her new domicile. Actually her rooms in the hotel were larger and more comfortable than her room in Oyster Bay. She was also vastly amused at her new status as my sister. In fact, it resulted in a rather funny situation of which neither the Richards nor I myself had thought at first. While in the normal course of events people treat each other with greater formality in public than in private, Anastasia and I were now forced to reverse the usual practise: in public we now found ourselves obliged to call each other by our first names, for otherwise nobody would have believed us to be brother and sister. More than that, we discovered that there were several Germans among the hotel's employees, which made it necessary for us, when talking in German, to address each other with the familiar "thou" instead of the formal "you."

In the meantime Princess Xenia began to display, as it seemed to me, genuine solicitude on Anastasia's behalf. She asked me to keep in daily touch with her by telephone, constantly enquired whether there was anything she could do for the Grand Duchess and finally began to urge me to visit her some evening for a heart-to-heart discussion of Anastasia's affairs, promising to be quite alone and refrain from quarrelling.

I felt very much tempted to accept Xenia's invitation, and to this day am not certain that I should not

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have done so. But Grand Duchess Anastasia was very much against it and I myself was frankly afraid of such a heart-to-heart discussion. In spite of everything I still liked Xenia too much to feel at all certain that I would not—as so often in the past—let myself be swayed off the right course by some new promises on Xenia's part. It also annoyed me that she was now apparently trying to convince me of her complete innocence and that every time she spoke to me asked :

"But why has Anastasia lost confidence in me?"

Why, indeed?

Finally I wrote Xenia a letter, polite but frank. In it I recalled her statements that Anastasia did not want either to establish her identity or obtain her fortune and that on August 1st she had summoned me with no thought of discussing her affairs. In reality, I now pointed out to Xenia, Anastasia had summoned me for that very purpose and had done so for the reason that a few days earlier Xenia had flatly refused to help her in the struggle for her recognition.

"Since shortly before her arrival," I wrote further, "you promised the Grand Duchess, as well as myself, that you would do everything in your power to obtain her full and official recognition and, as Her Imperial Highness insists, you also promised to help her by all means available to you to secure for her her fortune, the Grand Duchess was naturally equally shocked and mystified by the sudden change in your attitude, a change the more alarming for Her Imperial Highness as it occurred at a time when, as it appears, unless some steps were taken, her fortune was to be paid out to her aunt, Grand Duchess Xenia Alexandrovna.

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"This will also answer your question as to the reason why the Grand Duchess, as you rightly guessed, lost confidence in you."

Princess Xenia never answered that letter, and the very few messages I have received from her in subsequent years came to me only orally through Mrs. Derfelden.

To this day Princess Xenia continues to maintain the same enigmatic position towards the case of Grand Duchess Anastasia. She has remained completely faithful to Anastasia to the extent that she continues to state openly her conviction in regard to Anastasia's identity, and on a number of occasions has expressed her willingness to testify to that conviction under oath. As for the matter of Anastasia's formal reinstatement in her civil and proprietary rights, Princess Xenia has never made her attitude towards the problem clear. She also appears to have given different explanations of her own part in the sad events of the summer of 1928, but unfortunately not one of those explanations could be accepted.

Having started to work on the present book and eager to be completely fair to Princess Xenia, I wrote a letter to Mrs. Derfelden, stating briefly the manner in which I intended to describe the Princess's rôle in Grand Duchess Anastasia's case. I asked Mrs. Derfelden to show my letter to Xenia and stated that, if my interpretation of her actions was in any way incorrect and she had some different explanation to offer, I was only too willing to give her side of the story, provided, of course, it would be true and sincere.

But the only result of that *démarche* of mine was an-
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other plunge into Byzantium. First, Mrs. Derfelden told me that Princess Xenia did not object to the main points of my account but denied that she had ever believed in the existence of any fortune in the Bank of England, or promised to help Anastasia obtain it, or yet admitted to me that Anastasia's aunts were themselves certain of Anastasia's true identity. In other words, she did not object to the main points of my story, but at the same time denied almost all. Mrs. Derfelden also added that Xenia had given my letter to her lawyer, asking him to advise her whether she should react to it in any way or ignore it.

To my question as to what then in the Princess's opinion we had discussed, during our stormy session of July 22nd, and why she had been so angry at me for having served a legal notice on the Bank of England, Xenia gave no answer. But two weeks later Mrs. Derfelden wrote me a note stating that Xenia had never read my letter at all and had returned it to her unopened, but wanted to see my manuscript before its publication.

Thus the painfully familiar muddle had started all over again. At first the Princess had made her comments on my letter, then sent it to her lawyer, then announced that she had never even read it. It became regrettably clear to me that to obtain from the Princess any reasonable explanation of her activities in connection with Grand Duchess Anastasia's case remains as impossible to-day as it was nine years ago. As for Xenia's wish to read my completed manuscript, I, unfortunately, will not have the time to submit it to her, nor can I now see any sense in doing so.

It would seem, therefore, that the best I can do to

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be entirely fair to Princess Xenia is to state that she denies having ever offered to help Grand Duchess Anastasia in the latter's struggle for her rehabilitation; that she does not believe in the presence of a fortune in the Bank of England; that she had never told me that the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga admit in private the fact of Anastasia's identity.

What, under the circumstances, all our bitter debates of the summer of 1928 were about, where did all the letters, memoranda and statements of the time come from, remains for Princess Xenia to explain.

To be equally fair to Mrs. Derfelden, I must state that she does not appear to remember even as little as Princess Xenia does. Her present comment on the situation is that she had spent the whole summer of 1928 at the bedside of her sick daughter, Mrs. Auchincloss. Of our conversations in June and July she has not the faintest recollection.

In short, that tragi-comedy of denials, refutations, half-hearted admissions, strange lapses of memory, and all the rest of the timidity and betrayal on the part of Anastasia's friends which became so apparent to me on the very day of my arrival in Europe in 1927 continues to this day. Small wonder that the Grand Duchess has not as yet won her rehabilitation. But great wonder that her enemies, who are as determined and ruthless as her friends are timid and vacillating, have won nothing at all.

Or is it a wonder? After all, facts are facts, and truth has a force of its own which does not depend on the characteristics of its exponents.

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IN OCTOBER 1928, the Empress Dowager Marie died. It was a great blow to Grand Duchess Anastasia. She had no such sentimental illusions about the Empress Dowager as prevailed among Russian refugees who had all but developed a cult of the old lady. Anastasia knew, for instance, that her mother, the late Empress Alexandra, whom she loved to the point of worship, had suffered a great deal from the almost open hostility towards her of Empress Marie. She also felt hurt by the old Empress's lack of interest in her fate. Nevertheless, she felt much affection and respect for her grandmother and was more eager to see her than any other of her relatives. She also felt convinced—and I myself fully shared her conviction—that were she actually to meet her grandmother, the latter would acknowledge her immediately.

Never openly hostile to Anastasia, the Empress Dowager had tried, however, to ignore all reports about her. In the Empress's belief, which through the years had developed into a rather pathological fixed idea, the Ekaterinburg massacre had never taken place and her son with his whole family was still alive and would reappear some day. Thus, unlike other sceptics, the Empress Dowager doubted Anastasia's identity not because she thought it improbable that any member of the Emperor's family could have escaped from Ekater-

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inburg, but, on the contrary, because of her conviction that they all, including the Emperor himself, had escaped; whereas Grand Duchess Anastasia claimed that she alone had been rescued.

In excusing herself from giving Anastasia's case more serious consideration, the Empress Dowager quoted the reports of Baroness Buxhoeveden and Grand Duchess Olga, who both denied Anastasia's identity. At the same time the Empress did not permit any official declaration to the effect that Anastasia was an impostor, and it was her own brother, Prince Waldemar of Denmark, who had supported Anastasia for a considerable time.

Altogether, it seemed that the Empress Dowager was simply afraid of being convinced of the fact that the so-called Mrs. Tschaikovsky was actually her granddaughter and hence, that her son and other grandchildren were all dead. But that the Empress would indulge in any such intrigue as that engineered by her two daughters, Xenia and Olga, or, for any reason whatever, disown her granddaughter upon acquiring an actual knowledge of her identity seemed impossible.

Be that as it may, Grand Duchess Anastasia had dreamed for years of the day when she would penetrate into her grandmother's presence, confident—nay, certain—that all her trials would end right then. Now that cherished hope was gone—her grandmother, the Empress Dowager, was dead.

She said nothing, did not voice a single complaint. But for days thereafter she remained extremely depressed and I often surprised her sitting in a sort of stupor, her eyes wet, her thoughts apparently far away.

Nor did we have to wait long for the consequences

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of Her Majesty's death. Up to then the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga had denounced Grand Duchess Anastasia only through their mouthpiece, Gillard. But no sooner did the Empress Dowager breathe her last than they issued a statement to the press, declaring Anastasia an impostor.

That action on their part was the more revolting because it came without any provocation, not a word on Anastasia's case having appeared in print for two months. Their statement must have been—and later I was informed that it actually was—prepared long in advance and held only for the day of the Empress's death, the latter having forbidden any such public attack on Anastasia.

Incidentally, outside of Xenia's immediate family, only two of her first cousins had agreed to sign that statement. Even Grand Duke Cyril had refused to sign it. But Grand Duchess Xenia had six sons, so that her statement appeared with eleven signatures, and in consequence was accepted by the press and the public as representing the opinion of the whole Imperial Family.

Finally, of the people who had signed the statement only one—Grand Duchess Olga—had seen Grand Duchess Anastasia. And Olga, the same Olga who in 1925 wrote to Grand Duchess Anastasia: "I am sending you my love, am thinking of you all the time. . . . My thoughts are with you. . . . Am longing to see you. . . . Don't be anxious. You are not alone and we shall not abandon you . . ." now had the temerity to state to the press that she had found in "Mrs. Tschai-kovsky" no resemblance to Grand Duchess Anastasia in looks, voice or personality, adding:

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"Of all my questions relating to former days, friends or any intimacies, she could not answer one "

Unfortunately, Grand Duchess Anastasia had answered at least one of Grand Duchess Olga's questions—the question as to the manner in which her fortune could be found in the Bank of England!

So disgusted was I by the utter impudence of the Grand Duchesses Xenia and Olga, that I wanted to ignore it completely. Now that I hoped to see the whole matter settled soon in a court of law, it seemed to me that Anastasia's enemies by such tactics were only heaping more red coals on their heads for the day of Anastasia's legal rehabilitation. Unfortunately, however, to ignore that statement proved impossible.

A friend of mine who was very close to some of the highest officials in Washington informed me privately that, left unanswered, the statement of Grand Duchess Xenia and her children had to be accepted by the United States Government as true, and the United States could not harbour impostors and would, therefore, on the basis of Xenia's statement deport Anastasia back to Germany.

Moreover, there being no possibility of Anastasia's bringing a libel suit against her aunts in Europe, the only thing that could be done was for me to issue a counter statement strong enough to make it a grave libel if untrue. Should Grand Duchess Xenia bring a libel suit against me, Washington would allow Anastasia to remain in this country for all the duration of the litigation. And should Xenia fail to bring suit against me, Washington would accept it as a confession on her part that she knew my statement to be true and hence

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knew her own accusations against Grand Duchess Anastasia to be false.

After further deliberation it was decided that to deprive Grand Duchess Xenia of any excuse for not having read my statement, as well as to make my accusations against her the more pointed, I should put it in the form of a personal letter to her and, at the time when she could be expected to receive it, make it public through the Associated Press.

While I should have preferred not to write that letter at all, once I did have to write it I found it impossible to restrain myself and poured into it all the indignation and bitterness which had accumulated in my heart against Grand Duchess Xenia. Nevertheless, when I showed the first draft to my friend he added further to its sharpness to make certain that my accusations, if untrue, would be criminally libelous.

My letter was duly mailed and later published by the Associated Press. We waited for an answer in vain. When somewhat later Xenia's husband, Grand Duke Alexander, arrived in this country a delegation of Russians went to ask him what he or his wife planned to do to refute my accusations. Alexander answered that he had already written a very stern letter to my uncle, Peter.

Even some of his own admirers were unable to hide their astonishment and disappointment. Alexander could hardly have found a more ridiculous way of defending his wife's honour, for they knew that Uncle Peter himself had always belonged to the camp of Anastasia's enemies and had quarrelled with me be-

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cause of it. On my part I thought it a very good joke on Uncle Peter.

My letter served its purpose. Not only did the Washington authorities do nothing to deport Grand Duchess Anastasia, but they subsequently granted several extensions of her permit to remain in this country; and she could have remained here till this day had she chosen to do so.

As far as the general attitude towards the case was concerned it was, of course, the Russians who were most impressed by my letter, and not a few of them began to question whether Grand Duchess Xenia could be as innocent as they had thought if there was nothing she could answer to my open accusation. But for me personally that letter earned nothing but condemnation.

I was naturally unable to explain the situation which had developed in Washington, for I myself had learned about it only privately and through the personal kindness of Anastasia's and my own well-wishers. In the normal course of things Anastasia would simply have been deported without being given the chance of a public defence in the press. And because of their ignorance of the true situation many of my friends thought that I had simply *flown off the handle* and shown a deplorable lack of restraint.

As usual, my own relatives in Europe were loudest in their denunciations of me, and my own brother, in spite of his complete belief in Anastasia's identity, wrote me a very insulting letter. Ultimately I found myself deserted by all relatives and friends in Europe and do not expect to hear from any of them again until the day of Anastasia's final rehabilitation. They will

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be all back on that day, with flowers, candies and assurances of their "profound respect and equal devotion." That, however, is one consequence of Anastasia's recognition for which I feel no impatience.

Characteristic was Anastasia's own reaction to my letter to her aunt. As I had correctly guessed, Anastasia shared fully the peculiar attitude of all her relatives who were accustomed to make the worst accusations against one another, yet expected all commoners to treat all Royalty with utter deference and respect. Had it not been for her knowledge of the exact circumstances and the realisation that my public rebuke to her aunt was necessary for her own protection, Anastasia would, undoubtedly, have been quite as horrified as everybody else. As it was, she seemed hurt and in her attitude towards me ready to forgive rather than to approve.

At the same time she could not quite conceal a certain admiration she felt for my courage; she realised only too well that it was not any sort of loyalty to her aunts, but plain fear of them which made her other supporters so timid in their fight against them.

Thus the whole incident, while painful to everybody concerned, had, nevertheless, not only served its purpose, but definitely convinced Grand Duchess Anastasia that she actually could rely on my loyalty under any circumstances.

I was also much pleased that Mr. Rachmaninoff proved among the few who did not criticise me for my letter to Grand Duchess Xenia. Indeed, he himself appeared considerably impressed by it and soon afterwards visited Xenia personally, in order to discover

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whether she herself had anything to say in her own defence.

Telling me later of his meeting with the old Grand Duchess, Rachmaninoff said:

"I came to her not as an enemy but a friend. Moreover, I knew that she was quite eager to win me over to her side. I was quite frank with her and told her what I am always telling you, that it is equally difficult for me to believe Mrs. Tschaikovsky to be either Grand Duchess Anastasia or an impostor. The whole thing simply baffles me. But I also told Grand Duchess Xenia that the friends of Mrs. Tschaikovsky are basing their belief in her identity as Anastasia on a tremendous quantity of very weighty evidence. Having heard only one side, I now wanted to learn what the other side had to say about the matter.

"But the only comment I was able to obtain from Grand Duchess Xenia was: 'I simply know that she cannot be Anastasia.' 'But Your Imperial Highness,' I said to her, 'you must have some definite reasons for such conviction on your part. Mrs. Tschaikovsky's friends quote fact after fact after fact. Can't you give me at least one single concrete reason for your assertion that she is not Anastasia?' But Xenia kept staring past me at the wall and repeating like a wound-up mechanism: 'I simply know that she is not Anastasia.'"

"What explanation," I asked Mr. Rachmaninoff, "do you give to that refusal on the part of Grand Duchess Xenia to tell you of her reasons for denying Anastasia's identity?"

"There can be only one explanation," Mr. Rach.
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maninoff said, shaking his head "It is just as you say—Grand Duchess Xenia herself is convinced that Mrs Tschaikovsky is Anastasia. The strange part of it is that I myself am still unable to believe it fully, but I left Xenia with the impression that she is just as convinced of the fact as you yourself are."

The problem of Anastasia's maintenance was solved more easily than I had expected. The Richards supported her for about six weeks and, in the meantime, I had been able to get in touch with Mr. Rachmaninoff, who from abroad instructed his secretary to pay Anastasia's expenses for as long a time as she might remain without any other source of income. My publishers, whom I told that Anastasia planned to dictate her memoirs to me, offered her a contract and a very substantial advance, in spite of my warnings that I had no idea whether her memoirs would prove of any literary merit.

Unfortunately, my apprehensions were to be fully justified. Anastasia, who was one of the wittiest and most brilliant conversationalists I had ever met, proved also the dullest and most injudicious of authors. Not only the so called "undressing in public," but any kind of informality in print, appeared abhorrent to her. In consequence her dictations were void of any sentiment, indeed, of any life.

Far from trying to make the best of a dramatic situation, it was precisely every dramatic situation which she reduced to a few dry paragraphs written in the style of a Court calendar. At the same time she would allow neither ghost writing nor even plain editing. Everything she dictated had to be written down with

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stenographic accuracy and no argument could make her agree to the slightest change.

Thus her memoirs, of which I took down some 30,000 words, turned out to be utterly valueless for purposes of publication. Luckily my publishers took a most charitable view of the situation and said that they had been glad to be of help to Anastasia anyway.

Finally, late in the fall Miss Jennings returned from abroad and not only undertook to pay all of Anastasia's expenses, but assured me that she would make the Grand Duchess her only heiress.

But the financing of Anastasia's legal expenses proved much more difficult. Several people, including Miss Jennings, did contribute some money, but the total amount was far below the minimum necessary for bringing suit against the Bank of England or the Mendelsohn Bank in Berlin, in which latter there remained some of the Emperor's personal money.

I suggested the plan of starting with a libel suit against any of the persons or publications which had denounced Anastasia as an impostor. Such a suit would cost little and afford a safe test of the legal value of the evidence in our possession, for the burden of proof would rest on the defendant. At the time, however, none of the lawyers connected with the case agreed with me and went on instead with their preparations to proceed against the banks, in the hope that the necessary money would be raised eventually.

The task of attending Grand Duchess Anastasia personally, also, was not a simple one. It had its compensations—very great ones. For when Anastasia felt well it was a real joy to be with her, talk to her, indulge in

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common reminiscences. In normal circumstances she was also touchingly considerate and appreciative. But when that devil of quarrelsomeness and suspiciousness took possession of her she truly became a miniature Ivan the Terrible—as Princess Xenia had nicknamed her—and it required infinite patience and diplomacy to bring her out of those spells of ill temper and moodiness.

To blame her for succumbing to those spells was hardly possible. Her own cousin, Princess Xenia, could be quite as exasperating; and Anastasia had certainly a much better excuse for not being always able to control her temper.

Indeed, I never ceased to marvel at the fact that her dreadful experiences had not produced any obvious psychosis in her. But she naturally could not help having been affected by them to some extent. Often a casual remark on her part revealed to me, in a sudden flash, the immeasurable horror of her past and the consequent nervous tension under which she continued to live.

To give but one example, Anastasia's room in Garden City, being quite large, contained two beds, one of which stood by the wall and another at some distance, parallel to it. Noticing that in the daytime the Grand Duchess always rested on the bed by the wall, I asked her whether she did not want to have the other bed removed.

"Oh, no," she said, "at night I always sleep in the other bed."

"Why?" I asked.

She hesitated, then said: "It will sound silly to you,

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but I can never believe myself to be entirely out of danger. I prefer to lie by the wall, and when you or somebody else is with me, am not afraid to do so. But when alone I am afraid, for should somebody come to kill me I should be trapped. From a bed which does not stand alongside a wall I always can hope to roll off and hide under."

In what state would be the nerves of any person who could never retire for rest without the haunting fear of being attacked by a murderer during the night?

Nor could it be said that the Grand Duchess was suffering from anything like a persecution mania and could be gradually reasoned out of such fears. She was, on the contrary, astonishingly brave, never afraid of going anywhere or meeting anybody, never emotionally suspicious of some lurking danger or inclined to see enmity towards her where none existed. It was simply her full realisation of how many people were eager to see her dead, her recollection of the attempts to shoot and kidnap and poison her which had caused her to be always on her guard.

I tried my best not to allow the Grand Duchess to dwell on the past, but, as Princess Xenia had said, once she began to talk, it was impossible to stop her. Even so, I had never expected to hear her talk of the dreadful night of July 17th, but begin to speak of it she did once. As in the case of Mrs. von Rathlef who, as far as I know, had made the first written record of the Grand Duchess's account of that night, it was a reference to embroidery which caused Anastasia to speak of it.

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One evening, during some inconsequential discussion of embroidery, Anastasia's face suddenly acquired an expression of utter misery and she said in a low voice:

"You know, I started on a new piece of embroidery only a day before . . . that night . . ."

Instead of changing the subject of conversation, as I should have, I said: "I know."

The Grand Duchess gave me a bewildered look, then exclaimed: "How can you know?"

"Because that piece of embroidery has been found," I answered.

"Found? By whom?" she exclaimed again.

"By the investigating magistrates, of course," I said.

"What magistrates? Who has ever investigated anything?" Anastasia asked.

"Don't you know that there has been an investigation of your family's fate?" I asked in my turn.

"No, I have never heard of it," she answered.

Now it was I who stared at her, puzzled. And it was she whom Gillard and others were accusing of having acquired all her knowledge of the fate of the Sovereigns from books! But after further reflection I realised myself that she actually could not have heard of Sokolov's investigation. All the years in Germany she had been too sick to read, except very rarely, and naturally her doctors and nurses tried to keep away from her any books which were likely to upset her. I remembered also that it was only in 1925 that she had learned from Mrs. von Rathlef of the murder of her uncle, Grand Duke Michael, which had also been investigated by Sokolov. Indeed, the very fact that she herself was the only survivor of the Ekaterinburg

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tragedy she had learned from her rescuer, Alexander Tschaikovsky. And, outside of her own recollections, Tschaikovsky's account was the sole source of her information regarding the events of the summer of 1918. Obviously then, she had *not* heard of Sokolov's investigation before 1925, and I myself knew that neither Mrs. Rathlef nor the Leuchtenbergs had ever told her a word about it.

"And what did that investigation establish?" Anastasia asked me in the meantime. "How much did you know?"

"Virtually everything," I said. "Everything, that is, except the fact of your rescue."

"And when did you learn about . . . that night? How long ago?" Anastasia continued her questioning with growing excitement.

"Towards the end of nineteen-eighteen," I said.

"So you have known it all along . . . ?" she said, or rather moaned.

"We have," I said. "And it was for this reason that at the time of your appearance in Berlin there was so much of perfectly honest scepticism in regard to your identity. I myself refused at first to believe that you could have been rescued."

"How terrible," she whispered. "But I have never known that. I thought that nobody knew what really happened . . ."

She grew silent and began to shiver. I noticed that as usual the memory of the past was causing her temperature to mount. Her cheeks became very red, her eyes acquired a feverish glitter. After a while she lay down on her bed and covered herself up to her chin

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with blankets. I was smoking in silence, not knowing what to do or say. Then she began to talk again:

"We were awakened in the night. . . . They told us that there were disturbances in town, that we had to go down to the basement. . . . We believed them. We never suspected what was to happen. . . . We dressed in haste and went downstairs. Suddenly Yourovsky and several of his men ran into the room. Yourovsky shouted something and began to shoot. . . . He shot at my father . . . shot him through the head. . . . I saw father fall dead. . . . I was hiding behind Olga. Then I heard Olga scream . . . I can still hear that scream. . . . And then I remember nothing more. . . ."

How many times had I read about the events of that night; how many accounts of it had I studied; how often had I imagined it and how dreadful had the thought of it always been to me! And nothing was there in Anastasia's simple, brief account that I had not known for years; nothing dramatic was there in her words or manner. Yet seldom in my life had I been so shaken as during those few minutes, listening to her.

It was not what she said or the way she said it. It was that, while talking, she so obviously returned in her mind to that night of unfathomable horror and her thought seemed to materialise itself around us, engulf my own mind, make me also see that scene with a clarity well-nigh unendurable.

As for the Grand Duchess herself, after that brief talk she appeared completely broken—stupefied. As I had feared, she developed a high fever and had to remain in bed for the whole of the following day.

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Thereafter, as if by common consent, we carefully avoided the slightest mention of Ekaterinburg

Yet it seemed to me that as time went on and the Grand Duchess became accustomed to her new surroundings, her nerves began to improve and her spells of moodiness grew rarer as well as shorter. Even her quarrels with me assumed a new character. She still grew angry with me often enough, but the very nature of her anger showed that she no longer had the slightest doubt as to my loyalty.

Suspicious of me she remained, but on entirely different grounds. Now she suspected me not of disloyalty, but of having become too modern and democratic, of not paying sufficient attention to the rules of the old Court etiquette, of having lost my respect for Royalty, in general, of being full of sedition.

Yet she herself had entirely too vigorous a mind not to feel at times attracted by that very seditiousness of mine. Also, she fully shared at least one of my convictions—namely, that it was futile to live in the past, that nothing in this world could stand still, that the right thing to do was not merely to live with one's times, but ahead of them, if one could. Thus, the same remark or observation on my part which one day could lead to a bad disagreement, on another day on the contrary resulted in a most animated and interesting discussion.

One such discussion left a particularly deep impression on me. We happened to be talking of religion and I told the Grand Duchess of my theological studies, of my experiences in connection with religious work, my subsequent disappointment in the tenets and prac

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tises of the Greek Catholic Church. Anastasia listened to me attentively and made many comments which revealed an astonishing insight in regard to spiritual problems. Then she said:

"Do you know what day remains in my memory as the worst day of my life?"

My thoughts instantly returned to Ekaterinburg, but I naturally did not dare to voice them. This time, however, my guess proved utterly wrong.

"A day during one of my illnesses in Berlin," Anastasia went on without waiting for me to answer. "I felt that I was dying and began to think of all the things taught us by priests in our childhood, things in which my mother believed so firmly till the very end. And suddenly it came over me that there was no truth in what the priests had taught us, that they themselves had never believed it, that my parents and we children had been completely duped by them. And the sudden void which opened before me was more dreadful than anything I had experienced before or since. Nothing can be worse than to lose the faith of one's childhood."

"Would you like to regain that faith?" I asked.

"Never!" she said, "unless I could know it were true—Far better to suffer agonies, and face the truth, than be happy because of mere illusions!"

I may be doing a disservice to Grand Duchess Anastasia by quoting that comment of hers on the faith in which she was born. The unctuous fraternity of Philistines will certainly not like it. But then I suspect, they would not have liked Grand Duchess Anastasia under any circumstances.

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Sincerely religious people, however, will perceive the touch of true greatness in that woman to whom the worst earthly trials and tragedies appear less important than the spiritual suffering of discarding beliefs dear and comforting but untenable to her as abstract truth. Indeed, it is to people of such mettle that religion owes whatever progress it has made in the course of the ages.

But what a ghastly irony of fate that Grand Duchess Anastasia with her intense and unbending determination to "suffer agonies, but face the truth," remains to the world at large an impostor, a fraud—or perhaps a pathetic maniac—and this because of the assertions of such people as her aunts, the deplorable Gillard and all the rest of her opponents.

XIII

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WHEN Anastasia entered her room in the Garden City Hotel for the first time, she immediately noticed an etching on the wall above the bed. The etching represented a very handsome young woman dressed in the style of the First Empire, a light shawl partly covering her hair and wrapped around her neck. The Grand Duchess became unaccountably agitated and with a puzzled smile exclaimed:

"To find *this* picture in an American hotel, hanging above my bed! How strange!"

"What is there so remarkable about this picture?" I asked.

"Don't you know whose portrait it is?" Anastasia asked in her turn.

"I have no idea," I confessed.

"You ought to be ashamed of yourself," Anastasia said. "And I am not going to tell you. You must remember it yourself."

I tried to assure the Grand Duchess that I could never remember that picture, because I saw it now for the first time in my life. She continued to insist that I had to remember it and that she would not tell me anything.

My curiosity thoroughly aroused, I kept thinking of

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the picture for the rest of the day, but to no avail. On the following morning the Grand Duchess said

"I had a very restful night because she was watching over me." She pointed once more at the mysterious lady with a shawl. "I really was quite happy to find her here. It must be a good omen."

"It is a complete riddle to me," I laughed. "Won't you save me further agony and tell whose portrait it is?"

But the Grand Duchess refused and for several days thereafter kept teasing me about my ignorance and asking whether I actually could not remember who the lady was. Finally she relented and said

"It is a portrait of my great great grandmother. Now do you feel ashamed for having failed to recognise her?"

"Goodness!" I said. "I suppose I ought to feel ashamed, and it is a strange coincidence to find a picture of your great great grandmother in an American hotel. Even so, I must confess that I still do not know who the lady is."

"Fie on you," Anastasia said. "Queen Louise of Prussia, of course, mother of my great grandmother, Empress Alexandra—wife of Emperor Nicholas First. How is it that you know so little about my family? And now that I have told you that it is Queen Louise, can you at least tell me why she wore a shawl around her neck?"

"Fashion, I suppose," I ventured.

"Fashion?" Anastasia laughed. "Well, if you wish, for she did succeed in making a fashion of it. But why did she do it?"

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"I really don't know," I said.

"Because she had an ugly scar on her neck," Anastasia explained. "But you really ought to have known it yourself."

That incident proved to be but one of many of the same kind. As I soon discovered, Grand Duchess Anastasia was a veritable encyclopædia on matters pertaining to the history of all the Royal houses of Europe.

One day Anastasia gave me a newspaper and, pointing to some article, exclaimed indignantly:

"Read this!"

I naturally expected some piece of important and upsetting news, but presently discovered that the article concerned some collection of porcelain which the Duke of Hanover had just offered for sale.

"Isn't it terrible?" Anastasia exclaimed as soon as I had finished reading the article.

"What is terrible?" I asked, puzzled.

"That he dares to offer his collection for sale!" Anastasia said.

"Why shouldn't the Duke of Hanover sell his own collection?" I asked.

"Don't you know even that?" she retorted, as so often. "Because it is the only collection of its kind, and he has no right to offer it for sale!"

And she launched on a long speech, quoting some ancient agreements and treaties, of which I remember only that the collection was in some way entailed and could not be disposed of without the consent of the Hanover municipality. Had the Hanover municipality actually wanted to keep that collection, it could not

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have done better than retain Grand Duchess Anastasia as their lawyer.

I was thinking at the time of writing a biography of Peter the Great. Anastasia became quite enthusiastic about the idea, for Peter the Great was one of her favourite rulers. We began to discuss the various occurrences of his reign and I mentioned the mysterious death of his oldest son, Czarevich Alexis.

Russian historians had never been able to establish the exact circumstances of that death. Czarevich Alexis—a sad degenerate and drunkard who had killed his own wife by kicking her in the stomach when she was in the last stages of pregnancy—had crowned his misdeeds by organising a political conspiracy against his own father. He was arrested and put on trial, together with 149 of his fellow conspirators, but died on the eve of the announcement of the verdict. All the 149 of his associates were found guilty of high treason and executed. Some historians were of the opinion that he died of natural causes, for he had always been in ill health, others, that he died in consequence of the tortures to which all of the accused had been subjected, still others, that he had been secretly murdered, either to spare the Emperor the horrible necessity of signing the death warrant of his own son or, on the contrary, in the fear that Peter the Great was likely to pardon him.

But when, I began to enumerate those different theories to Anastasia, she interrupted me, and said:

“There is no mystery about Alexis’ death. He was decapitated on orders of Peter the Great.”

I was quite startled by Anastasia’s declaration and the positive tone of her assertion.

THREE
GENERATIONS
OF BOTKINS



PROFESSOR
SERGIUS
BOTKIN,
COURT
PHYSICIAN
TO
ALEXANDER
II III



DOCTOR
EUGENE
BOTKIN,
COURT
PHYSICIAN
TO
NICHOLAS II



GLEB BOTKIN, THE AUTHOR

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"I have never heard this version before," I said. "How do you know that Alexis was decapitated?"

"If there is anything I ought to know, it is the history of my own family," Anastasia laughed. "As for Alexis' death I know about it from a manifesto signed by Peter the Great himself. Apparently the Emperor had wanted at first to announce Alexis' execution officially, but was dissuaded from doing so. The manifesto he had signed remained, however, in the secret archives of our family."

Of those secret archives I had heard a great deal when I was still in school, but they seem to have been accessible only to the reigning Emperor and his immediate family. Even the cousin of Emperor Nicholas II, Grand Duke Nicholas Michailovich, who was a historian, did not—judging by his writings—possess a definite knowledge of certain facts which were known to be on record in those secret archives.

Anastasia's revelation started me on a new search for clues regarding the true manner of Alexis' death, but it was by the purest of accidents that I finally found a small French booklet privately printed in France by a Prince Galitzin sometime in the second half of the last century. According to the Prince's foreword, the booklet represented anonymous memoirs of one of Peter the Great's nearest lieutenants. Great was my astonishment when I found in that booklet the statement that Peter the Great had signed, on June 25th, 1718, two copies of a memorandum in the form of a manifesto announcing the decapitation of Alexis, but that the manifesto had never been made public and only one

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copy of it preserved in the secret archives of the Imperial Family

Another time Grand Duchess Anastasia asked me "Did the question ever occur to you how Catherine the Great, the daughter of an obscure German princeling, happened to be selected to marry the Heir of the Russian throne?"

"As far as I know," I said, "it was Frederick the Great who had recommended her to Empress Elisabeth "

"Right!" Anastasia said "But why did Frederick the Great recommend instead of some princess of an important German family, the daughter of the totally unknown Prince von Anhalt Zerbst, who, besides, was only a child at the time?"

"I have no idea," I said

"And another thing," Anastasia continued "Catherine's father, the Prince von Anhalt Zerbst, was a notoriously stupid man Where did Catherine herself get her brains?"

"From her mother or grandparents, perhaps," I ventured

"Not at all," Anastasia laughed "Catherine got her brains from no other person than her own father Only her father was, in reality, not the Prince von Anhalt Zerbst, but Frederick the Great himself "

That was another astonishing revelation, and when I communicated it to some of my Russian friends, they said that it was altogether impossible because Frederick the Great was only by fourteen years Catherine's senior After considerable research, however, I discovered that in the opinion of several historians Catherine, at the

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time of her arrival in Russia, had added two years to her age, for her real age made her too young for marriage. In such a case Frederick the Great was by sixteen years her senior. I further discovered that at the age of fifteen and sixteen Frederick the Great served as a plain officer in a small garrison commanded by the Prince von Anhalt-Zerbst; still further, that although the latter had actually enjoyed the reputation of an extremely stupid and useless person, Frederick the Great had given him the rank of field marshal.

Decidedly, had Anastasia been a Polish peasant—as Gillard insisted that she was—she would have had to be a miracle. I rather prided myself on my knowledge of Russian history and had never ceased studying it. Yet, here I was learning from Anastasia—who had not held a historical book in her hands for ten years—facts which even the foremost Russian historians had been unable to establish.

Significantly also, it was not just a general knowledge of history that Anastasia possessed. It was the intimate history of the Russian Imperial Family which she knew—knew it, moreover, not in the manner of a scholar who after years of research and study arrives at certain conclusions, but with the simple certitude of one in possession of what we call inside information.

From the way she spoke of those facts it was clear that to her they had never represented any mystery. She did not try to prove them even to me. She simply stated them with complete assurance. Also, those facts did not seem to possess in her eye the value of tremendously important historical revelations which they actually were. Rather, like a child, she felt delighted

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to know things which nobody else knew, and herself was amused by them, as one always is by family skeletons which have been successfully concealed from the rest of the world.

During one of those historical discussions I said to Anastasia:

"Another mystery to us commoners is the question whether Emperor Paul was the son of Peter the Third or of Catherine the Great's lover, Saltykov. Most historians believe that he was the son of Saltykov, but to me it seems that both in appearance and character Paul resembled Peter the Third in many ways. My teacher of history told me that members of the Imperial Family alone know for certain who Paul's father was, because a record of the actual circumstances of his birth was kept in the secret archives. Is that true?"

"It is," Anastasia said. "And I must disappoint you, for Emperor Paul was the son of Saltykov."

"In other words," I said, "the present Romanovs, yourself included, being the descendants of Catherine of Anhalt-Zerbst and Saltykov, have not a drop of the Romanov blood in your veins."

"That's right," Anastasia said. And she began to laugh like a naughty child, apparently vastly amused by the consideration that she was a Romanov without having a drop of Romanov blood in her veins.

Incidentally, the willingness of the Grand Duchess to answer my questions represented an important step forward in my struggle against some of her unfortunate idiosyncrasies.

Needless to say, nothing was so painful and insulting to her as any doubt in regard to her identity. And

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being both extremely sensitive and proud, she reacted to such doubts, not by attempting to dispel them, but, on the contrary, by refusing to dispel them. To try to convince a sceptic she considered utterly beneath her dignity. The moment she sensed that a question was being put to her for the purpose of testing her memory or knowledge of things, she froze into angry silence.

Still further, she could become quite angry even at people whom she knew to be convinced of her identity, but who tried to obtain from her statements which would allow them to convince others. It was to the latter category that I myself belonged. She knew from our very first meeting that I had fully recognised her, but for a long time suspected me of trying to gather material to prove her identity to the public.

Once, when, instead of answering some perfectly inconsequential question, she—as so often—asked irritably, “Why do you ask me that? Are you trying to test my memory again?” I told her frankly that her suspiciousness was getting tiresome.

“As a matter of fact, I was not trying to test your memory at all,” I said. “But suppose I did. What crime would there be in that? I can easily enough understand that you personally refuse to do anything to prove the fact of your identity to sceptics. In a way, it is most unfortunate, for you are your own best witness. But were I in your position, I should probably feel and behave just as you do. The more important it is for your friends to do everything in their power to convince the public that you are Grand Duchess Anastasia of Russia and not a Polish peasant or a Chinese mandarin.”

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"But that is just what I cannot understand!" the Grand Duchess flared up. "You seem to be always fussing with that public of yours. Pray, how does it concern me what some people in the street may think of me? It certainly does not disturb me in the least if they imagine that I am a Polish peasant; nor would it help me in the least should you convince them all that I am my own self. Those people mean nothing to me!"

Naturally, Anastasia would not openly admit that I was right and she was wrong, but I think that it was partly because of that argument that she soon ceased to object to my every question. She began to retaliate, however, by questioning me in her turn, and nothing would please her more than to catch me in not knowing something I ought to have known.

One day she approached me with a sly little smile and gave me a wooden paper knife with her mother's monogram encrusted on it in metal.

"Have you ever seen this paper koife before?" she asked.

"I am pretty sure I have," I said, for, indeed, the paper knife looked very familiar. "But I cannot remember where."

"Oh, no," Anastasia laughed. "You are not going to convince me of your identity with any such evasive answers. If you are Gleb Botkin you must know where you have seen this paper knife. Otherwise I shall send you to Gillard for identification."

I looked at the paper knife again, and the more I looked at it the more convinced I became that I had seen it before, but where I was quite unable to remember. And, in the meantime, Anastasia kept confusing

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me further with all sorts of silly suggestions as to the place where I might have seen the knife. Finally she burst into laughter and exclaimed:

"What a memory! This knife belonged to your father and was always lying on his desk. You saw it every day in the course of several years. It was your sister who gave it to me in Germany. I do hope, for your sake, that you will never have to establish your identity on the basis of your childhood recollections."

Such a pity it was that because of her amputated left elbow the poor *Grand Duchess* had lost the control of the fingers on her left hand and could not, in consequence, play the piano! It would have been a great consolation to her, for she was passionately fond of music and in her youth had been quite an accomplished pianist. Her memory for melodies was astounding. Two or three bars of any piece of music were enough for her to tell what it was.

The Richards had given her a radio and we developed a sort of game—tuning in on different programs without looking at the newspaper, and then trying to guess what particular piece of music was being played. Although my own memory for melodies is far from bad, Anastasia's score in that game was always incomparably higher than mine.

But one day, while listening to some man sing in a mournful bass, we both had to admit that we could not guess what his song was.

"Well, at least let us try and guess to what nationality it belongs," Anastasia said. "What is your guess?"

I listened for a while longer, then said: "Spanish."

"Never!" the *Grand Duchess* exclaimed. "Spanish,

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indeed! It may be anything under the sun, except Spanish!"

"I don't know what makes you so certain," I said. "But if it isn't Spanish it must be Argentinean."

"Goodness!" Anastasia said. "You are terrible! Yet you claim to know something about music. It is neither Spanish, nor Argentinean, nor of any other Latin land."

"It sounds Latin to me," I insisted.

"You are hopeless," Anastasia said. "I cannot guess what it is, but I know that it is not Latin."

At that moment the singer stopped and the announcer said: "You were listening to the love song of a Finn serenading the lady of his heart in the enchantment of a northern spring night."

Anastasia was seized with such laughter that she almost fell off her chair.

"And after this I am supposed to believe that you were born in Finland!" she said. "Not that it is necessary to be born in Finland in order to distinguish Finnish songs from Spanish ones. Spanish, Argentinean. . . . But you can afford it," she added, suddenly ceasing to laugh. "Can you imagine what Gillard would have written about me had I mistaken a Finnish song for a Spanish one?"

In all my efforts to induce the Grand Duchess to resume the use of the Russian language I failed completely. I argued with her, pleaded, begged and tried all possible tricks, but achieved nothing except a few rather bad quarrels. But of the fact that she had fully retained her command of Russian I managed to obtain sufficient evidence by bringing her Russian books.

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If a book contained illustrations likely to interest her, I gave it to her openly. Otherwise, I simply pretended to have forgotten a book I myself was reading.

Invariably she discussed *with me the contents of* those books, even though she would never admit having read them. The manner in which she pronounced the Russian names of characters and localities described in the books showed that—as I had already noticed during my first conversation with her in Secon—Anastasia had also preserved that charming and inimitable accent which had always marked her own and her sisters' speech.

Her refusal to talk Russian, when she so obviously knew it better than any other language and it was so important for her to prove the fact to the world, created for me the atmosphere of a bad dream. But eventually I myself gave up the matter as self-evidently hopeless. Nor do I think that Grand Duchess Anastasia will ever speak Russian again, except, perhaps, in court in order to convince the jury of her identity, although I am inclined to doubt even that.

But it was not always that Anastasia and I wrestled with such serious problems or talked on such subjects, as history, politics, religion or music. Indeed, more often we talked of nothing at all significant, as is the custom of any two persons who happen to meet every day.

At times Anastasia seemed to forget entirely all her sorrows and cares and began—as of old—to laugh, joke, talk delightful nonsense and indulge in funny pranks.

Her mischievousness remained, as it had always been, not free from a slight touch of cruelty. Thus,

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often enough, during an important legal conference or a visit of some pompous personage, Anastasia would place herself in a spot where I alone could see her and proceed to make the most atrocious grimaces, while I had to remain very grave and keep on discussing important matters with appropriate solemnity.

Or else, seemingly restless, she would pace the carpet, shuffling her feet and then, while passing me, and unobserved by others press her finger on the back of my neck, giving me a terrible electric shock; or yet, with a perfectly straight face, begin to make some extremely funny observations about those present, in German, while I had to pretend that she was making some serious comments on the subject under discussion.

It was, however, a form of cruelty which I forgave her only too gladly, which, in fact, I enjoyed immensely. For it was when in such a mood that Grand Duchess Anastasia became wholly the adorable naughty princess, the beloved "Little One" of the happy days of our childhood.

A thing I was particularly anxious to accomplish was to help Grand Duchess Anastasia conquer that devil of quarrelsomeness of which she had told me for the first time shortly after her arrival in New York. Her belief that she could not control that devil was the only trait in her which bordered on the pathological. It was also a cause of many past unpleasantnesses and a menace to her future, causing, as it did, so many people to turn against her.

Whenever the Grand Duchess referred to her future quarrel with me, which she still seemed to regard as inevitable, I pointed out to her that such a quarrel did

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not have to occur unless she actually wanted it. There was no devil in her, I assured her. She was simply glorifying her own capriciousness in imagining an unconquerable outside force. In reality, she had quite enough self-control to conquer it, were she only to decide in good earnest to do so.

At times such observations on my part annoyed Anastasia, but often enough she accepted them quite good-naturedly. Once, after a peaceful end to a particularly bad altercation, she said to me :

"You know, I actually may make an exception of you and never quarrel with you completely. Perhaps I would not have quarrelled with all those other people had they been a little more patient with me. But eventually they themselves always abandoned me. But you never seem to lose patience." And with a grateful smile she added : "I begin to think that I could not get rid of you if I tried."

Statements of that kind, which she subsequently repeated on several occasions, gave me, needless to say, immense satisfaction. Aside from anything else, I felt that were the Grand Duchess to become convinced that she could keep just *one* friend for life, she would with time include other people in the same category and eventually free herself entirely from the obsession that her every friendship had to end in a quarrel.

However, Anastasia's growing confidence in me proved also a source of new difficulties between us. The Grand Duchess had fully inherited that jealous possessiveness which was so characteristic of her mother, the late Empress Alexandra. The more she trusted me and believed in my ability to win her complete rehabil-

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However, Anastasia's growing confidence in me proved also a source of new difficulties between us. The Grand Duchess had fully inherited that jealous possessiveness which was so characteristic of her mother, the late Empress Alexandra. The more she trusted me and believed in my ability to win her complete rehabil-

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itation, the more eager she was to have me do nothing except take care of her affairs.

To some extent she was quite right: in continuing to occupy myself, not only with Anastasia's, but also my own affairs, including efforts to earn a living, develop my literary career and keep up my theological studies, I was trying to do too much. Anastasia conceded that I could not very well abandon my family, but felt that I should give up all other work and offered to give me all the money she could spare. She was touchingly insistent upon it and when she received the advance from my publishers absolutely refused to dictate her memoirs to me unless I would take part of it in payment for my work.

Had all the money Anastasia received represented advance payments for work done as much by me as by her, I might perhaps have accepted what would have amounted to the remuneration due me as Anastasia's paid secretary. But, except for that advance, all her money was given her by my own friends simply out of kindness.

Anastasia, however, could not understand that difference. She insisted that she needed my services as much as she needed shelter and food, so that she had every right to pay me a salary, and that by doing other work I was retarding the progress of her affairs. Still further, she did not believe that it was solely because of such ethical considerations that I refused to dedicate myself exclusively to the task of winning her case. She suspected that I did not trust her enough to make myself wholly dependent on her and that my devotion to her was not sufficiently great to make me abandon

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either my other interests in life or my desire to achieve a fame of my own.

Once more, the Grand Duchess was partly right. Not that I either mistrusted her or lacked in devotion to her. But I certainly could not regard my work on her behalf as a possible source of either income or fame. It was for me a duty dictated by nothing save my affection both for her parents and herself. As for my other occupations—especially my literary and theological work—I was, indeed, unable to abandon them, although again it was my desire to accomplish certain things, rather than achieve any kind of fame, which made it impossible for me to give them up.

But it was difficult for Grand Duchess Anastasia to understand such a point of view. Like her cousin, Xenia, who always seemed to suspect me of some ulterior motives, she was so permeated with the Byzantine tradition of the Imperial Court as to make a disinterested pursuit of abstract ideals appear to her almost too fantastic for belief. However, possessed as she was of much intelligence and perceptivity, she did eventually become convinced of my disinterestedness, but in consequence began anew to distrust, not my devotion to her, but my—in her opinion—eccentric temperament. One day, with somewhat assumed facetiousness, she said:

"Had I suddenly become the Empress of Russia I could not find a better Prime Minister than you. And yet people of your type have always been regarded by autocrats as most dangerous."

"Why dangerous?" I laughed.

"Because an autocrat cannot rely on any such thing

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as personal devotion," Anastasia said "He must feel certain of having all his assistants completely in his power. But a man who serves you, not in order to acquire either wealth or glory or any other personal advantage, but purely out of personal devotion to you is never completely in your power. He can neither be scared nor bribed into doing things he does not feel like doing. Besides, devotion is a matter of moods. A man might lose his devotion to you overnight and become your worst enemy."

"What a dreadful doctrine," I said "It is not without logic, I admit, but a diabolical sort of logic. Do you mean to say that your father, the Emperor, actually followed such a rule in selecting his assistants?"

"Of course he did. Every autocrat always did," Anastasia said. "With your knowledge of history you ought to have understood that yourself. Nor do I see anything diabolical in such a practise. Pray, on what basis do you select your servants? Would you like your valet, when you tell him to give you a certain kind of tie, to refuse to do so because in his own conviction some other tie is more becoming to you? It seems pretty obvious that a good servant must first and above all be willing to obey your orders, doesn't it?"

"Which is one of the many reasons why I never wanted to have a valet," I laughed "And again I admit that your reasoning is most logical, albeit in a rather ghastly way. At the same time it gives me a different picture of the events of 1917. If all the high officials and courtiers were selected on such a basis, no wonder they all ran from the palace at the first sign of danger, like rats from a sinking ship."

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"Oh, no!" Anastasia exclaimed, her eyes lighting with anger. "The Revolution had nothing to do with the way in which high officials were being selected! What caused the revolution and the betrayal of my father by most of his servants was my father's lenience. He was far too kind to the Russian people. They were not afraid of him. Had he been another Peter the Great or Ivan the Terrible, there would have been no Revolution!"

How very familiar that last statement sounded to me. I had read only recently the letters Empress Alexandra had written to her husband during the war. And the admonition, "Be another Peter the Great, be another Ivan the Terrible," seemed to be the main theme of all those letters. Anastasia had not read them, did not even know that they had been published until about a month later, when I myself gave her a copy of them. But, no doubt, the Empress must have repeated the same admonition often enough in her children's presence.

She seemed to have been obsessed with the idea that the Emperor could solve all his problems by becoming as cruel as Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible. But Emperor Nicholas II was not a cruel man and could not force himself to become one. Moreover, it was not to cruelty alone that Peter the Great and Ivan the Terrible owed the success of their reigns. Both happened to be great rulers and reformers and had treated so cruelly not the champions of progress, but rather the conservative nobility which opposed all progress.

But I did not attempt to explain all that to Grand Duchess Anastasia. Except on the subject of religion,

she continued to regard her mother as infallible and any criticism of the latter's opinions only offended her needlessly.

In the meantime, Miss Jennings kept asking Anastasia to leave Garden City and come to live with her. At first Anastasia flatly refused. I feared that Miss Jennings would feel offended by that refusal, but she did not. She continued to insist, however, that Anastasia was not comfortable in the hotel, and finally persuaded her to move into a separate house, hiring one of the waiters from the hotel as Anastasia's servant and guard. At the same time she did not give up hope that the Grand Duchess would eventually return to her and asked me to assist her in the matter by using my influence on Anastasia in that direction.

"There is no doubt that the Grand Duchess would be safer and more comfortable living with you than by herself," I said to Miss Jennings. "But I must warn you that she is rather difficult to handle. Her nervous condition has improved tremendously, yet once in a while she still succumbs to spells of moodiness and quarrelsomeness; and when she starts quarrelling she becomes not merely exasperating, but often quite insulting. Now she can be as exasperating and insulting to me as she pleases, but she cannot mean as much to you as she means to me; and I am terribly afraid that were she to live with you, after a few such quarrels you would turn against her."

"Never!" Miss Jennings exclaimed. "Do you suspect me of being the kind of hostess Princess Xenia proved to be? Who can blame the Grand Duchess for not being always able to control her nerves? The won-



THE EMPEROR WITH DR. BOTKIN AND HIS PERSONAL
AIDE DE CAMI CAPT. DREYER IN GERMANY IN 1909

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der is that she is merely temperamental instead of being stark mad. No, I can assure you that no matter what she does, I shall never turn against her. She can insult me as much as she likes, she can quarrel with me ten times a day. Never will I abandon her!"

"I am glad to hear that," I said. "But let me say again that mere friendship and admiration will not suffice to enable you either to remain always patient with the Grand Duchess or give her what she really needs. What she does need is true, motherly love. If you can regard her as your daughter with whom you could never become angry, whom you would forgive anything, whom, moreover, you were determined to nurse back to complete health at all cost, only then should I feel safe in advising the Grand Duchess to accept your invitation."

"Well, in such a case, you certainly can advise her to come to live with me!" Miss Jennings exclaimed. "You have described exactly my own feelings for the Grand Duchess: I do love her as if she were my own daughter. I will never abandon her. As I have already told you, I will leave my whole fortune to her. I hope this will convince you that you have nothing to fear in allowing me to take complete charge of her. And, of course, my house will be always open to you and you could continue to visit the Grand Duchess as often as you pleased. In fact, I would beg you to give her all the time you could possibly spare."

Once more I allowed myself to be persuaded when I should have known better. But so emphatic, so touching was Miss Jennings in her protestations of love for the Grand Duchess that it was impossible for me to

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doubt her sincerity. Even so, I could not openly advise Anastasia to accept Miss Jennings' invitation for she would take such advice as a sign that my devotion to her was waning. All I could do was to tell the Grand Duchess that I did not feel justified in opposing categorically Miss Jennings' plans on her behalf, because I knew that in Miss Jennings' house she would enjoy much greater comfort and luxury, and certainly be much safer than in Garden City, where she had nobody, except her one servant, to protect her.

Unfortunately, even such indirect suggestions on my part sufficed to make Anastasia suspicious of my true motives. She resumed again her complaints against the many interests I had outside of her own affairs, and even hinted that I was probably tired of her and wanted to get rid of her in order to devote myself wholly to my own work. In consequence a new element of strain entered our relations. To make it worse, my own health began to be affected by overwork and worry and I was no longer always able to be quite as patient with Anastasia as I had been before. The situation came to a climax shortly before Christmas when I contracted a severe case of influenza. The Grand Duchess suspected that my illness was a diplomatic one, that I simply wanted to take a rest. She felt deeply hurt and decided to move to Miss Jennings' house. I saw her for the last time in January, 1929.

In the summer of 1929 Grand Duchess Marie arrived in New York. She was one of the two cousins of Grand Duchess Xenia who had signed the latter's statement declaring Anastasia an impostor. Hence, the more pleased I was to learn from Mrs. Derfelden that

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Marie had now expressed to Princess Xenia her willingness to reconsider the matter of Anastasia's identity. Recent discussions of Anastasia's case with Grand Duke Alexander, Marie told Xenia, had given her a strong suspicion that Alexander was not acting in the best of faith. In consequence, she was very eager to meet Anastasia personally, and, were she to become convinced of her identity, do everything she could for her.

Shortly afterwards Marie actually approached Miss Jennings, asking her permission to visit Anastasia. But Miss Jennings found nothing better to do than forbid Marie to set foot in her house, because she, Marie, had signed Grand Duchess Xenia's declaration that Anastasia was an impostor.

I was horrified to hear of that decision on Miss Jennings' part, and although not acquainted with Grand Duchess Marie personally, wrote her a letter assuring her that Miss Jennings' attitude was by no means shared by other friends of Anastasia, and that I myself was most eager to have her meet Anastasia. I also volunteered to arrange such a meeting outside of Miss Jennings' house through some of my friends with whom Anastasia had remained on good terms.

I received no direct answer to my letter, but in a week or so was informed by Mrs. Derfelden that Grand Duchess Marie had offered to Princess Xenia her services as mediator between Grand Duchess Anastasia and the other members of the Imperial Family.

All these negotiations having been only oral, I naturally cannot vouch that it all happened in the manner in which the matter was reported to me, but somewhat later I was again informed that Marie and Xenia

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proved unable to agree as to the conditions on which they were to achieve a compromise

Nevertheless, I had reason to believe that some such negotiations between Grand Duchess Marie and Princess Xenia had actually taken place. Mrs Derfelden certainly could not have invented the whole story. Furthermore, in the course of the same summer I was visited several times by a Polish count—a close friend of Prince Youssoupov and well acquainted with Grand Duchess Xenia. The Count told me that Grand Duchess Xenia was now ready to acknowledge Anastasia formally, provided she could be assured of receiving a substantial part of Anastasia's fortune.

"The trouble is," the Count explained, "that if Xenia simply acknowledges Anastasia, Anastasia will get her money and give nothing to Xenia. But if Xenia first concludes some agreement with Anastasia as to the division of the money and then acknowledges her, she will make herself open to the accusation of having entered an agreement with a possible impostor for the purpose of getting money from the Bank of England."

It was indeed a difficult situation and although the Count and I discussed many different schemes, none of them appeared quite satisfactory.

"My only regret is," the Count said at his last meeting with me, "that you and I had not been charged with the task of settling the dispute from the very first, before so much bitterness had accumulated and so many new people got mixed up in the case. For some reason your opponents have imagined that you were primarily interested in getting hold of that money in the Bank of England and therefore would not assist in a compro

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mise. Now I can see that you were precisely the person who could have achieved a compromise."

"Which shows that mistrust is not always helpful," I observed. "I have been preaching a compromise to everybody concerned from the very day on which we learned that the Bank of England had refused to give Anastasia's money to Xenia. And the only demand I made was that the compromise had to be based on the formal acknowledgment of Grand Duchess Anastasia by Grand Duchess Xenia and the rest of the Romanovs."

"I am pretty certain that Grand Duchess Xenia by now wishes she had acknowledged Grand Duchess Anastasia long ago," the Count said. "But now there seems to remain no other way out of the *impasse* except for Anastasia to establish her identity through the courts."

I had to admit that the Count was probably right. As for Anastasia's friendship with Miss Jennings it lasted for about a year. But eventually Anastasia—as I had feared—began to quarrel with Miss Jennings also. Unfortunately Miss Jennings' love for the Grand Duchess proved not quite as great as she had claimed and she assumed a very unpleasant and in my opinion unfair attitude.

Once more completely abandoned by everybody Grand Duchess Anastasia went back to Germany in the fall of 1931.

From Germany she wrote me a very kind letter, asking me to forget all our past differences and once more assume charge of her affairs. In my answer I assured Anastasia that those differences had never meant any-

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thing to me and that I would continue to fight for her rehabilitation by all means available. The only trouble was that my earnings remained very small, so that I still could not offer the Grand Duchess any financial assistance, which was what she needed most at the time.

Luckily other friends came to her support. Mrs. von Rathlef, the faithful Dr. Rudnev, her German cousin, Prince Ernst Frederick of Saxe-Altenburg, and others. The Prince of Saxe-Altenburg had been of particular help to the Grand Duchess, in spite of the fact that he is also closely related to her German uncle and bitter opponent, the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt.

She remains in Germany to this day.

It might have been worse. After her experiences in the United States, Grand Duchess Anastasia probably deems herself lucky to be back in Germany.

For the present, Anastasia does not appear to be in any immediate danger. The Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt must have either understood that she never had any intention of causing him trouble, or else decided that his fight against her cost him too much in money and reputation. Besides, the new regime in Germany has robbed the issues which seemed so acute in 1927, of all importance, and the German princes and monarchists now have other things to worry about than their wartime escapades and their hopes for the restoration of monarchy.

Be that as it may, neither the Grand Duke of Hessen-Darmstadt nor his talented representative, Gillard, has been heard from for years, and the present German authorities have given no sign of any hostility towards Anastasia. She is also well taken care of finan-

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cially and her health is at present in a satisfactory condition.

Yet her life remains an unrelieved nightmare, a martyrdom and will remain such until the world grants her that minimum of human rights the least among us possess, her true name and identity.

It would be so in the case of any of us placed in Anastasia's position. Who could be happy if forced to lead the life of "an eternal question mark," if branded with the unbearable stigma of an impostor and a fraud?

Earlier in this book I have stated my conviction that it is the issue of her full identity, of her inner integrity, which stands foremost in Anastasia's mind. That the refusal of her relatives and the world in general deprives her of position and wealth is only an additional cause of her suffering—not the real source of it. Yet it is a cause which cannot be altogether overlooked. Anastasia would not be human were she able to forget completely her Imperial heritage which to her, incidentally, is as much a duty as a privilege.

It was during one of our many discussions of the problem of her rehabilitation that I realised the full extent of Grand Duchess Anastasia's ambitions.

Arguing as so often she did that it was futile to try to convince her relatives of her identity, Anastasia said: "They do not have to be convinced, *because they know perfectly well who I am.* But they are rebels—revolutionaries! They had always opposed my father and hated my mother and now they continue to fight against me. What then do you expect to achieve by convincing them of something they had never doubted? They must be, not convinced, but forced to acknowledge me

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as the Head of the House of the Romanovs, which I am—which they know me to be.”

I had long since realised that Anastasia was not the meek and sentimental creature who could be happy doing nothing except planting flowers and feeding birds, as she had been pictured by some of her well-wishers. She did like flowers and she did like birds, but she was not the type of person to vegetate in idleness and feel no desire for an active and purposeful existence. Even so the fact that she actually considered herself the head of the House of Romanovs—which could only mean that she also regarded herself as a candidate for the Russian throne—was a revelation to me.

At the same time I could not help reflecting how characteristic it was of Grand Duchess Anastasia that, unlike the other Romanov pretenders, she was not laying any direct claim to the title of Empress or forming any shadow cabinets. All sham was organically repellent to her. The only claim she did make, for the present, was a perfectly sensible one—she maintained that she was the Head of the House of Romanovs, and that all Romanovs and the latter's adherents had to acknowledge her as such. It was a practical and politically very shrewd attitude, for the House of Romanovs still existed, still possessed considerable influence, and the position of a Romanov whom all his relatives would recognise as their leader would not be an empty sinecure. At the same time, were the Romanovs actually called back to rule Russia, the generally acknowledged head of their family would automatically ascend the throne. Nevertheless I permitted myself to point out to the Grand Duchess that according to the

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Russian law of succession, female members of the House of Romanovs ranked after all the male members, so that every male Romanov, no matter how distantly related to the Emperor, was closer to the throne than the Emperor's own daughters. In consequence, even if fully acknowledged, Anastasia could not pretend to the position of the head of the Romanov family, because there were a great many male Romanovs still living.

"I know all that," Anastasia said. "But the law was decreed only by Emperor Paul and for the sole reason that he hated his mother, Catherine the Great; and laws can be changed, you know. Russia has been ruled by women often enough: Princess-Regent Sophia, Empress Catherine the First, Empress Ann, Empress Elisabeth, Catherine the Great. . . . Besides, who of the male Romanovs, now living, has any clear claim to the throne? Each of them has done something to disqualify himself. And the plain fact remains that I am the only surviving child of the last Russian Emperor!"

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